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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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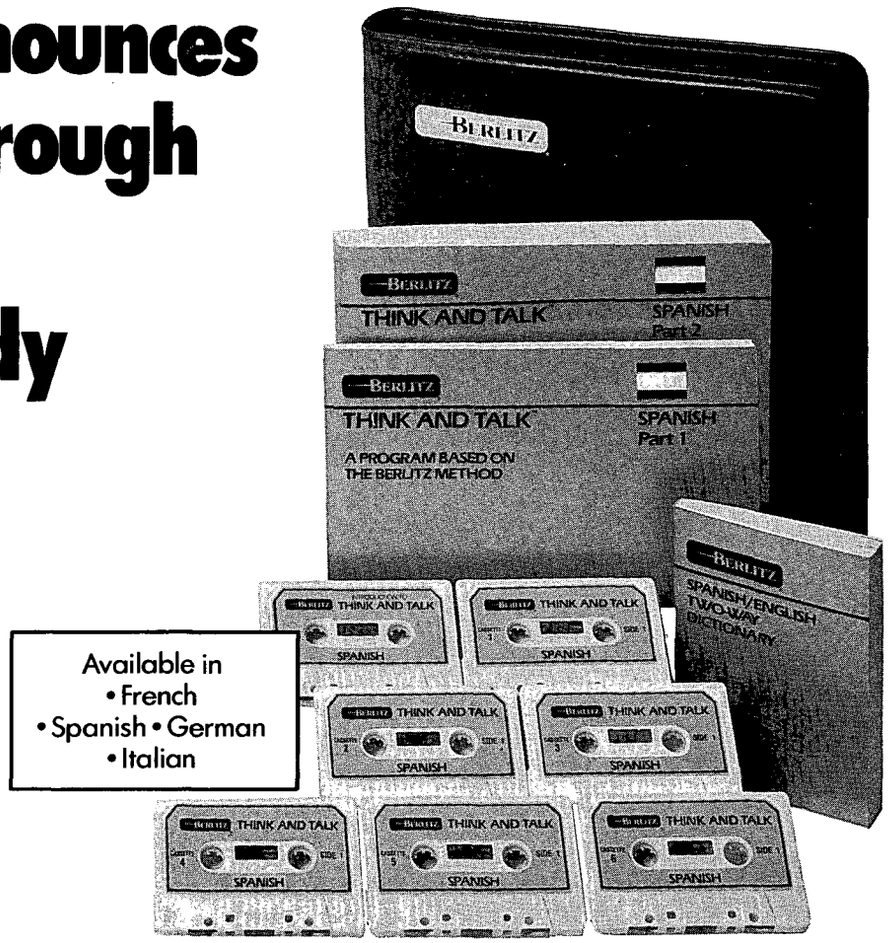

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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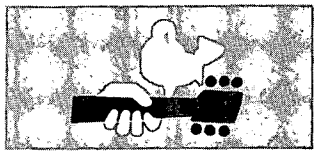

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Cover and illustrations by Rickard Nass, except where noted.

AUGUST 1989/3

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A Publication of
The Rockford Institute

Editorial and Advertising Offices: 934 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103.
Editorial Phone: (815) 964-5054.
Advertising Phone: (815) 964-5811.
Subscription Department: P.O. Box 800, Mount Morris, IL 61054. Call 1-800-435-0715, in Illinois 1-800-892-0753.
U.S.A. Newsstand Distribution by Eastern News Distributors, Inc., 1130 Cleveland Road, Sandusky, OH 44870.
Copyright © 1989 by The Rockford Institute. All rights reserved.
CHRONICLES (ISSN 0887-5731) is published monthly for $21 per year by The Rockford Institute, 934 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103-7061.
Second-class postage paid at Rockford, IL and additional mailing offices.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to CHRONICLES, P.O. Box 800, Mount Morris, IL 61054.
The views expressed in *Chronicles* are the authors' alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Rockford Institute or of its directors. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE
Vol. 13, No. 8 August 1989

On 'A Lot of Americans'

Albert Einstein once noted that a thing should be made as simple as possible—but no simpler. I am afraid that E. Christian Kopff (Cultural Revolutions, May 1989) has reduced my ideas below an acceptable minimum and distorted them in the process.

I have said that teaching is undervalued in today's university, that we do not put sufficient stress on the importance of communicating to the next generation the great ideas and books that are our heritage and theirs. To observe this—and to advocate recognition of excellent teaching—is very far from what Dr. Kopff charges me with: "asking that our children be taught what people who have never wrestled aggressively with great literature remember from their graduate school days." Excellent teachers don't do this. They read and contemplate books anew when they teach them. They grapple time and again with the enduring questions great literature raises. Their students benefit. Our society benefits. And we should recognize such efforts as part of the scholarly office—even when they do not result in publication. Excellent teachers—those whom John Silber calls "sound scholars who never publish books or articles and instead publish orally in the classroom"—should have an honored place in the academy.

And so should those sound scholars who do publish. Their work preserves memory of the past, engages scholars with other scholars and sometimes with larger audiences as well. It also enriches teaching, as Dr. Kopff observes. For all these reasons, I recently recommended an increase for 1990 in NEH funding for our Research Division—and this at a time when our overall budget request remains about level with this year's.

But it would be a mistake to regard publication, in and of itself, as what Dr. Kopff calls an "objective standard of academic expertise." Even in refereed journals, one can see the "self-isolating vocabularies" and "symptoms of the fragmentation of the humanities" that William Bennett lamented when he was chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. It is because examples of jargon-laden and hyperspecialized research are so easy to find that publications like *The New Republic*—cited by Dr. Kopff—can call the entire research enterprise into question.

For the sake of serious scholarship, we need high standards for research—just as for the sake of our students, we need high standards for teaching. We at the National Endowment for the Humanities are committed to both.

—Lynne V. Cheney, Chairman
National Endowment for the Humanities
Washington, DC

Among the many stirring and insightful things between the covers of the May issue I find a couple of alarming hints of cannibalism that call to mind Pogo's "I have met the enemy and it is us."

Thus we have the distinguished journalist Sam Francis blasting away at President Bush's conduct of the presidency (already) because he appointed William J. Bennett the "drug czar." And E. Christian Kopff mounts a sharp if rather vague and unsupported attack on Lynne V. Cheney at NEH, of all people, for being against research and thereby playing Trojan Horse for "minimal standards" in higher education.

Neither of these attacks is warranted by the facts; indeed, far from it. Bill Bennett, philosopher and lawyer by education, was never a public schoolteacher yet turned out to be the best secretary of education in the history of the Republic—according even to *The Washington Post*. Simply because he has never been a dope addict (unless cigarette smoking counts) or a narcotics officer doesn't mean he won't be as effective in the vexed sphere of dope trafficking as he was in prodding the country's education establishment into semiconsciousness. (Let's not expect miracles!) George Bush knows talent

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when he sees it, apparently, and knows to go with talent and track record over "qualifications" on a resumé.

As to Lynne Cheney, she has been and remains a superb chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities—precisely because she has courageously and effectively raised the banner of standards and scholarship against the trendy deconstructionists and know-nothings of the academy. As chairman she has been receptive to the key role of the Division of Research Programs within the Endowment, and funds and percentage of the budget of NEH itself devoted to *research* have increased—not diminished—under her leadership.

She has carried the fight for standards and substance at all levels of humanities education to opponents throughout the country. It is, in fact, Lynne Cheney far more than any of the other (certainly very estimable) persons mentioned in favorable ways by Kopff who has made precisely *standards* the issue for American higher education day in and day out over the past several years.

While petulance has its Menckenesque allure as good clean fun, it may be useful to remind *Chronicles* that blasting fellow underworkmen in the vineyards of political and educational sanity is more than merely wasted powder and shot. It is a form of psychological Russian roulette. With such friends who needs enemies?

More generally, it may be worth suggesting that a siege mentality, an inability to labor in tolerance in concert or coalition with any who differ by one centimeter from your own convictions, blasting for the sake of blasting with facile pen and speech, tend to diminish the coherence and capacity of some self-described "conservatives" to pull together toward common objectives and to act and speak moderately and responsibly.

—*Ellis Sandoz, Director*
Eric Voegelin Institute
Baton Rouge, LA

Dr. Kopff Responds:

I did not attack Dr. Cheney's fine work as chairman of the NEH nor her thought-provoking report, "Humanities in America." I pointed out the difficulties of improving the humanities when even so good a person can write ("Humanities in America," p. 11):

"It is also important to recognize that research and learning need not always involve publication. Observed Dean Baldwin of Pennsylvania State University's Behrend College, 'There are other ways to do scholarship besides publication in a refereed journal.' Reading, thinking, exploring imaginatively over a number of areas in a way that will benefit students is also scholarship and should be so acknowledged."

I, too, would like to acknowledge reading and thinking as scholarship, but what objective criteria shall we use to evaluate that reading and thinking? Suppose a teacher is preparing as Dr. Cheney describes, by rereading a work of literature or history—in the original language, of course, perusing the standard commentaries and monographs, and keeping up with the periodical bibliography, so as to do more than merely repeat what was remembered from graduate school. Can that teacher really find no new insight on the text or no mistaken trend in contemporary scholarship? All we are asking is for the teacher to take a few of the insights currently "published orally in the classroom" and share them with the profession as a basis for evaluation.

Using refereed publication as the basis for objective evaluation is not a perfect system. It is better than nothing. *Chronicles* has praised Dr. Cheney's work at NEH, has praised "Humanities in America" in an editorial, and has even published a favorable review of her novel. If we are to be mutually sustaining, it is time to come up with new objective and relevant grounds for evaluating good teaching, or else admit that, in our imperfect world, publication, confirmed by the winning of extramural grants, comes closest to providing the criteria that are most likely to reward the kind of creativity that is the basis of learning and teaching.

On 'Tolstoy Tradition'

Although I enjoyed Sally S. Wright's "Writing in the Tolstoy Tradition" in the April 1989 issue of *Chronicles*, I must point out at least one error.

The caption underneath the photograph of Nikolai Tolstoy states, "the Macmillan government participated in atrocities in Austria in 1945," implying that Harold Macmillan was the British prime minister then. There were two PM's during the year 1945, but Macmillan was not one of them. Winston Churchill was replaced as PM by Clement Attlee during the Potsdam Conference, held from July 17 to August 2, 1945.

In 1945, under Churchill, Macmillan was minister resident in the Mediterranean. He was PM from 1957 until 1963.

Also, the word "atrocities" seems a little strong. At the end of the war, the British and Americans returned displaced persons to the Soviets, as agreed at the Yalta Conference. This was bad enough but can hardly be called atrocities, which occurred when the Soviets, and also the Tito partisans, executed, tortured, and jailed the DP's.

I do not know whether Macmillan was responsible for what happened, but it appears that Churchill and Roosevelt should also be blamed for making the deal with Stalin to return the displaced persons.

—*George A. Borgman*
Westwood, MA

On 'Bright Shining Liar'

From the May *Chronicles*, top of the first column on page 31: " . . . General Vo Nguyen Giap . . . apologized publicly for torture excesses. . . . The Vietcong were 'forbidden to execute the accused savagely'. . . ."

Russ Braley seems to give the 'Cong name to all the Communist forces in Vietnam, an error not unknown in journalism. The North Vietnamese Army (NVA) were a force distinct from the Vietcong (the enemy indigenous to Saigon's republic). Indeed, each fought under its own flag.

Vietnam veterans get cranky about such things.

Now to get back to my May issue. . . .

—*Robert J. Powers*
Col., USAF (Ret.)
Shreveport, LA

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GLASNOST IN CHILE? Pinochet is getting no credit for it. Yet at the same time General Secretary (and now also President) Gorbachev's policies are being hailed as major breakthroughs, departures from the previous (Brezhnev) era. They are deemed to hold out great promise for the people of the Soviet Union, if only they can succeed. *Glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (reconstruction) are widely praised by commentators as major moves to advance the Soviet Union toward a better society. There are some skeptics, of course — David Satter (in *The New Republic*) doubts that *glasnost* can work. But on the whole, writers in *The Nation*, *The New Yorker*, and other prominent publications express basic respect for Mikhail Gorbachev's intentions and efforts.

In contrast, there is no one who likes General Pinochet. The question is, why? While he has been a ruthless opponent of political freedom in Chile for almost as long as he has been in power, in 1980 he helped forge a new constitution for that country that paves the way to full-scale political democracy. We have just witnessed one major result of this constitutional reform — an initial election in Chile deciding whether Pinochet may serve for another full term or whether he has to step down within a year after his term expires. It looks like the general intends to abide by the outcome, and in March 1990 elections will be held to decide who will govern Chile. Pinochet has also established the kind of economy in Chile that has led to greater prosperity there than in any other Central and Latin American country. While Chile has pockets of poverty, nevertheless the country has had lower inflation and higher employment than its neighbors.

We do not know what Pinochet will or will not do. He is still in power, and the constitution that gives him that power is far from expressing the will of even the majority of the people, much less protecting the rights of a minority. Pinochet is a military dictator, there is no doubt about that.

What do we know about Gorbachev? He has proposed no change in the Soviet constitution, a document that explicitly prohibits anyone in the Soviet Union from criticizing the Soviet government. The law may not always be enforced, but it is crucial that there is no legal obstacle to invoking it. Has Gorbachev advocated changing the nature of Soviet society? No; he simply regards some earlier policies as following from "distortions of socialism." He has no desire, judging by his own words, to abandon Lenin's "genuine socialism." The means of production in the Soviet Union will continue to be collectively owned and thus exposed to government regimentation. *Perestroika* may lead the state to relax its regime, but certainly not to abdicate its role as ultimate sovereign. If one recalls that in Marxist socialist theory the major means of production is human labor, Gorbachev is unambiguously committed to treating Soviet citizens as mere cells in the body of the state. Nor should we lose sight of the fact that Gorbachev was an enthusiastic follower of Brezhnev. His role in the KGB cannot be ignored, either.

Of course, Pinochet's partial embracing of capitalism — via his recently resigned University of Chicago-trained finance minister Hernan Buchi — does not mean that Chile enjoys a free marketplace, with everyone's private property rights fully acknowledged and respected. Yet at least Pinochet seems to be bent on heading toward that kind of a system, one that sees the individual as sovereign, not the state.

Why then are American intellectuals so contemptuous of Pinochet, but not critical, indeed quite welcoming of Gorbachev? Why would Gore Vidal, for example, praise the Soviet leader so highly — calling one of his speeches the most profound political talk he has ever encountered (and Vidal is the author of the novel *Lincoln*!)? Is it that for much of the American intelligentsia there are no enemies to the left?

— *Tibor R. Machan*

ACADEMIC THOUGHT POlice have struck again, this time at the Catholic University of America, where officials have snatched away a full professorship they had earlier offered to occasional *Chronicles* contributor Paul Gottfried. As of March, Dr. Gottfried had every reason to expect the job was forthcoming. The department of politics faculty had overwhelmingly voted in his favor, including Chairman James O'Leary, previous Chairman Claes Ryn, and incoming Chairman David Walsh. He had received the enthusiastic support of the dean of the college of arts and sciences, Antanas Suziedelis. His credentials were outstanding: he had published five books and over 70 articles in academic journals, and the department's thorough search found him particularly skilled in classical political theory, the field in which they were seeking a teacher. The university had assigned him classes and agreed upon a salary. It was, to all appearances, a done deal.

Then the accusations started. Gottfried was said to have made "anti-Zionist statements," according to one history professor. There was no record of such statements by Gottfried — who is Jewish — nor was it clear what Zionism had to do with qualifications to expound ancient political texts. But that was just the beginning. Soon professors from outside Catholic University, such as Harvey Mansfield at Harvard and Thomas Pangle at Toronto, were campaigning against Gottfried by phone. His offense, according to Mansfield, was to be a "controversialist." (Gottfried has on occasion criticized Mansfield and Pangle, among other Straussians, arguing that they are guilty of projecting the preoccupations of modern intellectuals onto the thinking of the ancients.) Dean Suziedelis's support rapidly evaporated; a committee he had appointed voted against the offer to Gottfried in a meeting in which his credentials were not even mentioned, let alone debated. (Asked to comment on the event, the dean took refuge in "confidentiality," not-

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withstanding that the minutes of the meeting are a matter of record.) In a subsequent, poorly-attended meeting of full professors of arts and sciences, a proposal that Gottfried's credentials be considered was turned down. As one participant put it, Gottfried was "ideologically dangerous."

Since Paul Gottfried has enjoyed civil debates and friendly relations with many Straussians, particularly the students of Harry Jaffa, his plight can hardly be attributed to Straussians as a group. There are rumors—and they are just that—that Gottfried's criticism of neoconservatives in *The Wall Street Journal* and elsewhere may have been a factor. If that were the case, it would be one more sign that the conservative coalition is coming apart at the seams.

Internal politics at Catholic University seem to account for some measure of Gottfried's difficulties. Yet the intervention of professors outside CUA and the nature of the charges against him leave no doubt that his primary crime was in taking seriously the notion of intellectual freedom. The intelligentsia can tolerate, even welcome, so-called "progressive conservatives" who differ with them only on modalities—affirmative action instead of quotas, for instance. But Gottfried is an Old Right conservative who questions many of the fundamental assumptions of the self-styled "progressives"—about the desirability of sexual equality, social democracy, etc. Clearly, scholarly achievement counts for little if you are marketing the wrong ideas. (MK)

A TRADE SURPLUS NATION

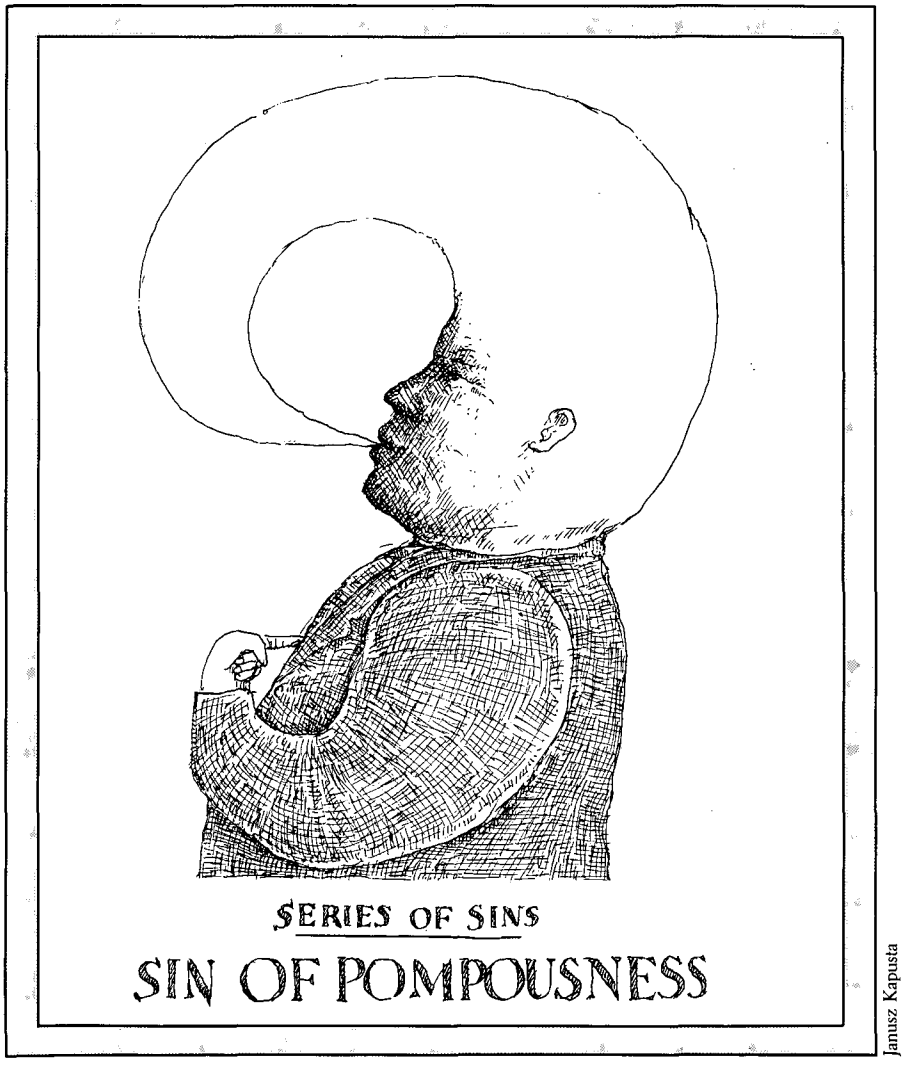
for the century before the 1980's, the US had been the world's leading industrial power since 1900 and a net creditor since World War I. The apparent reversal of all of these positions in less than a decade has elicited both consternation and controversy. By early 1989, a *Washington Post*/ABC News poll revealed that a majority of Americans (54 percent) rated Japan "the strongest economic power in the world today," compared to only 29 percent who thought the US still held that title. To cope with these developments, policy analysts reach for models of international economics that fit their prejudices. Unfortunately, many conservatives have picked the wrong model, opting for a "feel good" globalism derived from liberal economic theory.

The intellectual confusion over international trade was in evidence at a conference I attended in Washington sponsored by the Institute for Research on the Economics of Taxation. IRET has done a splendid job promoting "supply-side" policies for the domestic economy. However, their topic, "US Foreign Tax Policy and the Global Economy," moved into areas beyond their normal reach.

James Roirdan of Mobil Corp. opened the seminar by stating the classic globalist position: "Environmentalists have taught us that the world is borderless. . . . What is true for the environment is also true for business."

The flow of trade and investment, another speaker argued, between the US and Japan was no different from what takes place between Massachusetts and Connecticut. This may be true in a narrow accounting sense, but what about the larger implications, the ones that really count? That the movement of a factory from Massachusetts to Connecticut depresses the local economy in the former while stimulating that of the latter is beyond doubt. That is why state governors spend so much time courting corporations. This is not a national problem because one state's gain offsets the other's loss within the national economy. But if that factory relocates outside American borders, the positive and negative effects no longer cancel each other out. They occur in separate societies.

Fortunately, most of the other speakers were well aware of the fierce rivalry that characterizes world markets. Their problem was how to square this with their liberal "free trade" as-



Janusz Kapusta

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sumptions. Speaker after speaker opened with a ritualistic attack on "mercantilism" and "economic nationalism" before turning his attention to ways of helping American firms defeat their foreign rivals—the very goal of mercantilists and economic nationalists!

Despite the attempt to link mercantilism with isolationism, just the opposite is true. Mercantilism was the policy of governments that recognized the opportunities opened by sea-trade with Asia and the discovery of the New World. Each country wanted its merchants and industrialists to capture as large a share of the available wealth, resources, and markets as possible. It was a philosophy of national capitalism born of dynamism. As Carl J. Freidrich once said of mercantilism, "It may, indeed, be called the most comprehensive theory of the emergent modern state." Thus when IRET speakers urged American business to expand into new markets and to develop new products in order to expand their share of the international economy, and for changes to be made in tax policy to aid this expansion, they were speaking as mercantilists without knowing it.

Barry Rogstad, president of the American Business Conference and Abraham Krasnoff, CEO of Pall Corp., were the most aggressive examples of unconscious mercantilism. Their theme was "we must fight everywhere to win anywhere." Both emphasized the need for American firms to penetrate the home market of rivals in order to weaken them by denying them a secure base. The value of a large domestic market to achieve economies of scale and to support advances along the learning curve is substantial. From this base, firms are able to expand into export markets.

This strategy has been used with devastating effect by foreign companies in the US market, yet neither speaker addressed this problem. They could not see that the logic for attacking foreign markets also held for the need to protect domestic markets. Rogstad came close when he allowed that "dominance at home leads to dominance overseas." And Krasnoff noted this truism as the reasoning behind the rising barriers to US exports around the world. He was particularly worried about the economic integration of Europe set for 1992. The Europeans are seeking a large "internal" market their industries can dominate. They wish to create an advantage, not throw one away as the US has done.

The pressure of competition forces people to abandon ideologies based on abstractions. Performance and results become the uncompromising standards of policy. Conservatives have long recognized the theoretical errors that underline the economic failure of socialism, but have been less able to see it within their own camp. Slowly, however, the requirements of industrial policy and strategic trade are making themselves felt. It is time to break the paralyzing spell cast by liberal globalism and advance the position of the US in the centuries-old struggle for economic advantage.

—*William R. Hawkins*

THE "AFFIRMATIVE ACTION curriculum" returns east: T. Edward Hollander, New Jersey's higher education chancellor, has argued that college teachers should "rethink what they teach and . . . seek ways of bridging the gaps between their areas of expertise and the diverse student populations in New Jersey colleges and universities." What this obscure language means is that Hollander wants New Jersey's higher educational institutions to have faculty members introduce teaching "practices" and curriculum reform that reflect the contribution of nonwhites and women to this culture.

If embraced, New Jersey will be the first state system of higher education to introduce the notion of an "affirmative action curriculum." Hollander has conceded the controversial nature of the plan, but has insisted this measure is needed and "the step is morally right." He also noted that he would not coerce faculty to change the content of their classes. He says he plans to use the carrot, not the stick—employing a reward system for those colleges that subscribe to the new approach.

Nonetheless, there is little question that the chancellor is sending a message to the faculties in state-supported colleges and universities. He contends, "We must do that which is both morally right and educationally sound to ensure that our students are intellectually and culturally equipped to function and live in a global and highly diverse society. Our campuses must become multicultural communities which honor and respect diversity."

The instrument the New Jersey Higher Education Department will use to foster change in the curriculum is an initial fund of $300,000 for "multicultural projects." One need not be too imaginative to realize that "multicultural" in the present climate means feminist studies, black studies, and the prevailing orthodoxy about current affairs, including a romantic interpretation of the so-called Third World.

While Hollander rationalizes his approach as a bold attempt to recognize other cultures in the curriculum, an unexceptional goal, everyone—including Hollander, I suspect—recognizes full well that this reform represents the installation of an approach designed to appease radical sentiments on campus.

Even more important, in offering rewards for a way of perceiving issues, the state is now determining legitimacy for the "right way" of thinking. Those opposed to feminism as an ideology or those who consider the traditions of the Third World less worthy of study than the traditions of the West, will tacitly and possibly overtly be informed that their positions cannot be recognized at New Jersey campuses. One can only wonder how academic freedom will be retained in an environment where formal preference is given for a point of view.

Perhaps the central issue in the Hollander position is his implicit belief in the fungibility of subjects and culture. The essential readings of Western civilization are invariably trivialized by the assumption that a woman or a black or a voice of the Third World can by virtue of birthright replace the traditions of Western democracy and its accompanying sense of honor and tolerance. That the highest educational officer in New Jersey would propose so daring a reform in order to counter the monopoly of white Western men in the curriculum—his description—is, in my view, a manifestation of a form of philistinism I'd hoped would remain at the elite schools like Stanford.

—*Herbert London*

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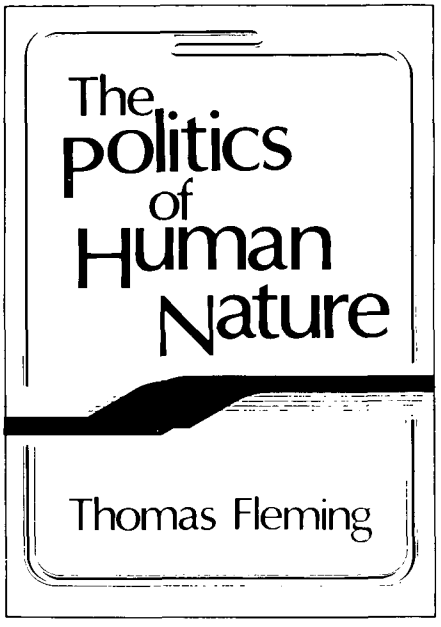

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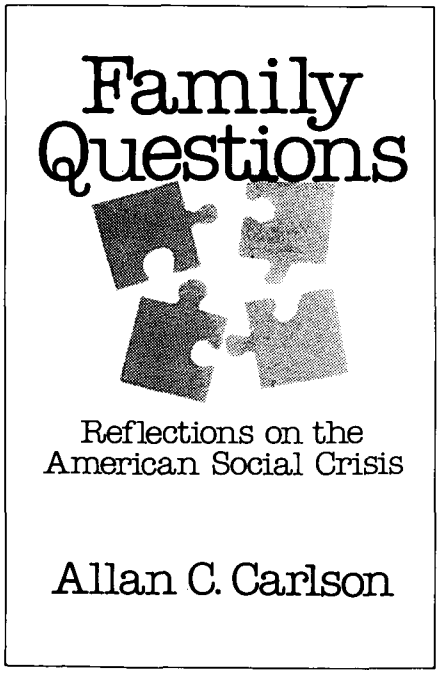

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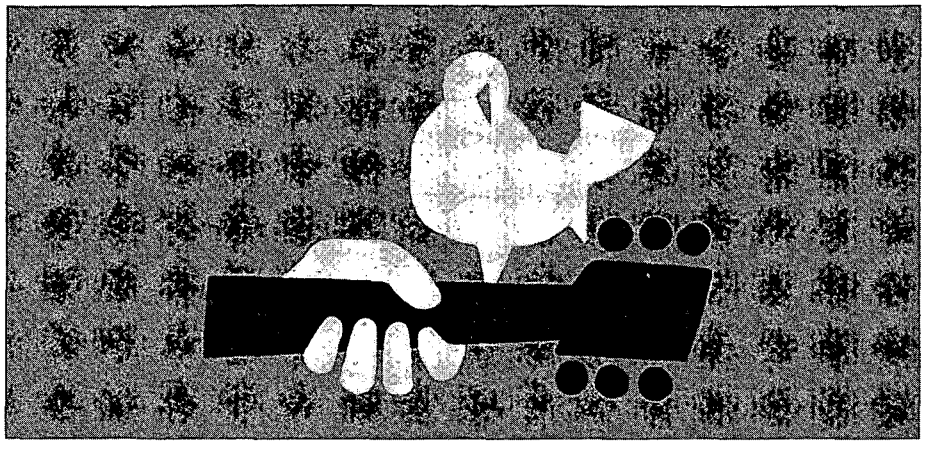

Rock and Roll Never Forgets

by Thomas Fleming

In the 1950's any real American boy knew that whatever he wanted to be when he grew up, it was not an underemployed television father like Ward Cleaver or Ozzie Nelson. Our fictional heroes were from another time. They were the cowboys, frontiersmen, and pioneers who had taken risks that seemed inconceivable to a generation sheltered by the capacious umbrella of the New Deal. Television in the 50's sometimes could seem like a struggle between the bumbling suburban fathers, who never knew best, and the Matt Dillons, Paladins, and wagonmasters willing to back up their word with a gun. Somewhere out in the world, we felt, there had to be a real life, a life filled with passion and risk.

It is no accident that the culture of the 1950's is divided between genteel novelists like John P. Marquand or James Gould Cozzens and the wild and rebellious beats like Jack Kerouac. Paul Goodman was the first to pose the essential question, in his still-relevant book, *Growing Up Absurd*: how could boys learn to be men in an increasingly bureaucratized, sanitized, and safe society of whitebread sandwiches with bologna and Miracle Whip? It is a question that George Roche has been asking more recently in such books as *World Without Heroes*.

People look back to the 50's as the golden age of television and as the Indian summer of American popular culture. But what I remember is the tasteless vulgarity of Uncle Miltie, film stars like Rock Hudson and Tony Curtis, and the lifeless mannerism of barber-turned-singer Perry Como. Then came the summer of 1954, and for the next several years, nice little children all over the country were introduced to life in the raw by a wild group of Southerners, black and white: Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash—all recording for Sam Phillips' Sun Records—not to mention Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Sam Cooke, and Jackie Wilson.

These boys did not come out of Tin Pan Alley, where professional songsmiths were still rhyming croon and June. They were still more remote from the suggestiveness of the bisexual Cole Porter, whose "Let's Do It" might have been written as a theme song for sophisticated hypocrisy. In the world of pop music, fornication and adultery were fine, as long as you were nicely dressed, drank cocktails with clever names, and called it love instead of sex.

What were, after all, the popular songs of the BR (before rock) era? I can remember them from the butchered renditions given by Gisele MacKenzie and Snooky Lanson on *Your Hit Parade*. The big hits of 1954 were songs like Eddie Fisher's "Oh, My Papa" and Dean Martin's "When the Moon Hits Your Eye Like a Big Pizza Pie, That's Amore." The naive hedonism of "Blue Suede Shoes" and "Rock Around the Clock" had a dangerously liberating effect on an entire generation.

Perhaps the real anthem of doomed youth hit the charts in June of 1957. A young scapegrace from Mississippi, who could not make up his mind if he wanted to go to heaven or hell, started fooling around with a song he could only half remember. The result was "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On," a song so suggestive that DJ's refused to play it, until the singer appeared on the Steve Allen show. Jerry Lee Lewis became the first of three cousins to make it big in the entertainment business (the other two are, of course, Mickey Gilley and Jimmy Swaggart). Many an American boy resolved that if he couldn't grow up to be a classics-quoting gunfighter like Paladin, he wanted to be at least as wild and as menacing as Jerry Lee.

The great rockabilly and rhythm and blues artists set the tone for all that would be best in rock and roll music. Unlike the slick and saccharine mass-produced songs of the 40's

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and 50's, this music had roots. In the songs of Hank Williams, Elvis Presley, and Jerry Lee Lewis, we are skipping over a hundred years of commercialization and returning to the Anglo-Celtic roots of American music, to the violence and authenticity of the old Border ballads, to a confrontation of real life—take it or leave it—as it is lived by passionate men and women who are sorry for their sins but will not lie to you about them.

It is no coincidence that the most depraved of the early rock and rollers, Jerry Lee ("the Killer"), with his countless wives, including one who died under mysterious circumstances, and the transvestite/bisexual Little Richard Penniman, have both gone on periodic religious binges.

"Nothing gold can stay" and nothing authentic can survive commercialization. Commercial pop songs continued to do well throughout the 50's and 60's. In 1956, Elvis had shared the spotlight with Gogi Grant ("The Wayward Wind"), Kay Starr ("Rock and Roll Waltz"!), and Perry Como ("Hot Diggity"). In 1957 Elvis, Sonny James, Buddy Knox, Buddy Holly, and Sam Cooke all reached number one, but so did Andy Williams and Tab Hunter, and in the top ten there were still such veteran pop stars as Jimmy Dorsey, Patti Paige, the Hilltoppers, the Ames Brothers, Teresa Brewer, Tony Bennett, and Frankie Laine. By 1958—the year of "At the Hop," "It's Only Make Believe," "Great Balls of Fire," and "Sweet Little Sixteen"—they still had to compete with Perez Prado, Perry Como, Andy Williams, and Billy Vaughan, among the many pop artists who made it into the top five. And even in 1966, the top hits of the year were the Monkees' soft-rock, "I'm a Believer," the imitation Mariachi "Spanish Flea," and the pseudo-vaudeville "Winchester Cathedral."

Under the circumstances, it was hardly difficult for Tin Pan Alley to make a comeback in the guise of rock and roll. Many songwriters, notably the team of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, were just as happy working with Peggy Lee as with Elvis. The Brill Building on Broadway became home to a song factory in the early 60's that included such assembly line writers as Carole King, Barry Mann, Cynthia Weill, and Neil Sedaka. Sedaka became a singing star in his own right in the early 60's, although his career was cut short by the British Invasion.

In a way, the commercialization of rock was inevitable. The music industry, as much as the car business, depends upon quantity, minimum standards, and brand identity. How could you get that from irresponsible rednecks and ghetto blacks? Some rock and rollers were wise enough to join the enemy: Elvis put himself in the hands of Col. Tom Parker and became rich making sentimental movies and singing saccharine ballads with strings. Even Buddy Holly was turning pop in the year before his death—he dumped the Crickets and started recording with an orchestra.

The best of the white musicians went back to country music, a process that is still going on today, but was initiated by Conway Twitty, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Brenda Lee. The choice, then and now, was between Nashville and New York. In a recent interview, Phil Everly summed up the conflict: "New York was a joke to us. . . . It was a joke to all of rock. Buddy Holly, Buddy Knox, Jimmy Bowen, Eddie Cochran, you name them; they were all country, born and bred. Tin Pan Alley was jive and we knew it."

In retrospect, 1958 was the beginning of the end. In December of that year, a doleful piece of sentimentality titled "To Know Him Is to Love Him" hit number one. The song was written by Phil Spector, who took the title from his suicide father's tombstone and formed a group called the Teddybears to record it. In the years to come, Spector would make and unmake groups, release records under the wrong artists' names, and swamp studios with rhythm players while he overdubbed, cut, and pasted the vocal tracks until he had created the massive "wall of sound" he was looking for. While he claimed to be the pop music Wagner, Phil Spector is to rock and roll what Ray Kroc was to restaurants.

The original rock era was a brief flicker of rebellion against security, coinciding with the rise of the TV Western. What the real Jerry Lee and Elvis shared with the TV cowboys was not only restlessness and a willingness to take risks, both represented an old-fashioned form of American patriotism that goes back to the Whiskey Rebellion: men who were loyal to their country, even while they were suspicious of authority. So-called scholars who look back on the Western, however, see only the evils of bigotry. The author of *Who Shot the Sheriff*? characterizes the TV Western as a compound of "sexism, racism, violence, imperialism, and historical distortion"—the qualities attributed to America by liberal historians.

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Conservatives worry over whether businessmen are selling the rope by getting involved in pop culture. The truth of the matter is the other way around: rock music is not corrupting business, but business and commercialization have always corrupted rock and roll.

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Even as rock lapsed back into pop, the networks turned the Western into soap operas like *Bonanza* and *The Big Valley*. By 1960, the fires had gone out of rock and roll. Even before going into the Army, Elvis had sold out to Hollywood; Jerry Lee Lewis was in disgrace, when it came out that he had probably committed both bigamy and incest by marrying his cousin; Buddy Holly and Richie Valens were dead in the Clear Lake plane crash that is one of the few enduring legends of postwar history.

For nearly five years, the music business would be dominated by the new Tin Pan Alley in the Brill Building, and by Phil Spector, whom friends describe as very liberal even in high school, and by arguably the worst influence on American popular taste since Irving Berlin, Dick Clark. It was Clark who gave the American Wagner his first big break.

When the Beatles and the Stones arrived in 1964, they represented a return to a more authentic Anglo-Celtic music—traditional songs as well as the new songs written by the musicians themselves. It is simply no accident that the only real rock and roll produced outside of North America comes from our cousins in Britain and Australia.

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It's true that the British Invasion brought in purely pop groups like Peter and Gordon and Herman's Hermits, but it also gave us the Hollies and Graham Nash, Van Morrison and Them, Eric Burdon and the Animals. We were back to the ballads, and if it torpedoed the career of Neil Sedaka, it's small wonder. As Neil complained in his 1982 memoir, *Laughter in the Rain*: "Groups like the Rolling Stones—antiestablishment, sexy, rebellious, crude—ascended to the top . . . exactly the opposite of what my music represented."

You know the rest of the story of the 60's: drugs, rebellion, campus Marxism, communes, Woodstock—the whole revolution thing that John Lennon made such fun of before falling for it. Since I'm "talking about my g-g-g-generation," let me share a little thesis I formed over the years. Very few of the kids listening to rock music in, say, 1967, were political. If they thought about the war at all, it was first: "Please Mr. Custer, I don't wanna go"; second, a certain admiration for the men fighting it: "Silver wings upon their chests, these are men, America's best," as Sgt. Barry Sadler sang in his top ten tribute to the Green Berets; third, a rooted contempt for the bureaucratic leadership that viewed their body counts and kill ratios as so many profit and loss statements.

There were hard-core, leftist troublemakers, but much of the campus unrest amounted to little more than the student hijinks that have terrorized colleges since the Middle Ages. In an interview for the recent book *Off the Record*, John Mellencamp—one of the best rock musicians of the 1980's—tells a tale that will seem familiar to most students of that era: "I went to Washington . . . to protest against the war. Afterwards I went back to my mom and dad's house and back to college. How committed was I, really? Did I go to Washington for the party? For the drugs?"

Other than good times and the usual high spirits of youth, what did fuel the so-called revolution? At the time, it struck me as something like the spirit of the Southern Agrarians in the 1920's. What you heard most often were complaints against machines and bureaucracy, the lack of religious spirit in America, the routinized, unchallenging jobs in the marketplace, the lack of tradition and the decay in the sense of community. With McNamara going from Ford to the Pentagon, the country was obviously being run by faceless corporation men, even more colorless than Ward Cleaver and Ozzie Nelson. President Johnson's entire Cabinet seemed to be made up of passionless men who knew nothing of real life. Bob Dylan summed it up, this rift between the generations, in a memorable line: "Something is happening and you don't know what it is, do you Mr. Jones?"

But if rock and roll had started out as a reaction against the liberal status quo, it turned into a vehicle for left-wing protest against everything. And so it continues to be today, even when the country has moved temporarily beyond such puerility. Why? There are two reasons, I think. The first is that the culture of Europe and the US is essentially leftist. Since few rock musicians are at all educated, they are forced to take their cues from the pundits and professors whom they otherwise despise. Liberalism is the air we breathe, whether we call ourselves radicals or conservatives. As Alasdair MacIntyre pointed out recently, there are neither radicals nor conservatives in the modern world, only conservative liberals, liberal liberals, and radical liberals. What chance does a lower class ignoramus like John Lennon or Bruce Springsteen have?

The second reason follows from the first. If the mainstream culture is liberalism, then any commercialization must embody that culture. "Buy the World a Coke" is both a great commercial message and a great liberal message. The original rockers were, by and large, Christian country boys with a conviction of sin and an irrational patriotism that puts them far to the right of virtually every conservative journalist or politician I can think of, and it is typical of the lifelong Democrat Jerry Lee Lewis that he supported Ronald Reagan in 1984 not because he believed in supply-side economics, but because he loathed Geraldine Ferraro.

But Jerry Lee is a redneck, born in a state of rebellion against everything official. Nice college boys like Rick Nelson—Chicken McElvis—felt the pressures of the liberal mainstream and went with the flow. I'll never forget seeing him in the late 60's on *The Tonight Show*. When Carson quipped to Nelson that his music seemed to be more political than in the old days, Rick answered: "That's right, Johnny, it's in to be committed."

And so they are committed to every conceivable cause that comes around. When they're not cutting records or freezing their brains with coke, rock musicians seem to spend their time doing monster benefits for the oppressed people of the world: Sun City, LIVEAID, BANDAID, AIDS AID. Even the cynical Lou Reed has got into the act. A man previously famous for celebrating heroin, speed, and sadomasochism has now discovered a social conscience, and his new album is full of compassion for the victims of the Republican Party. After telling us, a decade ago, to "Take a Walk on the Wild Side," Lou now wants us to have pity for the AIDS patients who apparently took his advice.

Conservatives tend to take a dim view of contemporary rock music, even conservatives who profess to like the "classics." In a general way, they are right. MTV, Madonna, Michael Jackson, Prince, and the ritualized violence of heavy metal are not the signs of a healthy culture. Like Dr. Johnny Fever (of the television show, *WKRP in Cincinnati*), real fans of rock and roll spend much of their time listening to Oldies stations, because in the 1970's and 80's, real rock and roll was almost smothered by disco, synthesizer music, and by such ominous pop stars as Liza Minnelli and the saccharine Barry Manilow, who went from writing TV commercial jingles to writing songs that sounded just like airline commercials.

I can sum up the trend line of 70's music by citing one little bit of history: in 1975, Neil Sedaka once again had a #1 hit single, "Laughter in the Rain," and in 1976 he received five BMI awards as well as song of the year. His songs were recorded by Captain and Tenille—remember "Love Will Keep Us Together?"—Bette Midler, and Liza Minnelli.

There is a false and hysterical note in most passionate denunciations of rock. First it was the philosopher-king Allan Bloom, and now, more recently, it is Stuart Goldman in a recent *National Review* article, who tells us that the problem is aging rock and rollers who are supposedly a

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corruptive influence. I'm afraid I don't get the point. Is Mick Jagger really a primary influence on contemporary rock? It is easy to draw very unpleasant conclusions if we compare Bon Jovi with Buddy Holly, but what if we compare Tom Petty, Ian Anderson, and Dire Straits with the Teddybears, Frankie Avalon, and the Shangrilas? A somewhat different picture emerges. One remembers Robert Frost's famous remark that he didn't want to be a liberal in his youth for fear of becoming a conservative in old age.

To a great extent rock music, like all commercial popular music, is offensive junk. But in the 1950's rock and roll, like the blues and country music that gave it birth, had a certain spontaneity and authenticity. Now, both rock and country music are safely encased in a commercial shell of major labels, broadcast conglomerates, and MTV, and if things stay the same, it is a very bad sign for a nation that has always prized individualism and entrepreneurship. Let me put the issue as bluntly as I can: conservatives worry over whether businessmen are selling the rope by getting involved in pop culture. The truth of the matter is that it is the other way around: rock music is not corrupting business, but business and commercialization have always corrupted rock and roll. It is all too easy to point the finger at disgusting rock videos. MTV is as perverse as everyone says it is, but MTV is an essentially commercial enterprise run for profit, and the most disgusting things they show may be the same commercials for Levi's and Twix that appear on the Saturday morning network programming for children.

Most of the diatribes against rock music stem from nothing more serious than nostalgia for the world of one's childhood. In fact, this is true of most criticism of life in the 1980's. But the problems in American life run deeper than the recent past of the 1960's, and the attempt to fix the blame on a single generation is as foolish as it is immoral. To locate the sources of corruption in our public culture, we shall have to go not just to the first generation that suffered under the welfare state or even to the generation that created it. The sources lie in what for most Americans must seem to be the misty past of ancient history, the period between the Civil War and World War I. For it was then that the modes of the music changed and the city's walls were shaken.

The Pilgrim of Apples (18th Century)

by Brendan Galvin

I set out
to taste of those thousands
the peddlers gloried over,
apples they said
were strawberries to the nostrils
but sour in the eating,
or hinted of fennel,
or were best at the moment
when green
pales to yellow on the skin,
or the seeds darken,
or the natural waxes surface—
meaning October, when sun
relents and the fruit is racy,
stained with September evenings,
already rusted by fogs, or hangs
purple as ram's horn
where a seed
dropped in an ox turd
took its chances,
sprouted stubborn with thorns
in a far pasture corner, the buds
partridge-trimmed until
there shoved from a juicy
reservoir the one true scion.
I passed up new-grafted whips
for old trees fighting through
lichen and scale, —ones
the deer beat a path to
by nose alone— and ate
off the knife from fonts of earth
returning to earth, savoring
local names: the Flavin Surprise,
the Cheek-in-Bloom. You,
in your century, will have
Red Delicious, Granny Smiths,
and a few other perfections
for the eye, but mush
on the palate, cores a dog
rejects by ear for their
want of snap. They will be
fenced against wanderers
like me, and warehoused away,
gassed atrocities, waxwork
celebrities, but no Oneida
Sheepnose or Wethersfield
Beauty, no Garrett's Christmas
Revenge, nothing that has a story
with it, nothing to resurrect
papillae on the tongue
like that apple I found
in a wheelrut once, browned
by November frost,
and thawed in my pocket
and robbed of such wine
the northern lights swam in my eyes.

This poem and "Apprenticed to the Bird Master" (p. 27) are from Brendan Galvin's new collection, Wampanoag Traveler, *published by Louisiana State University Press.*

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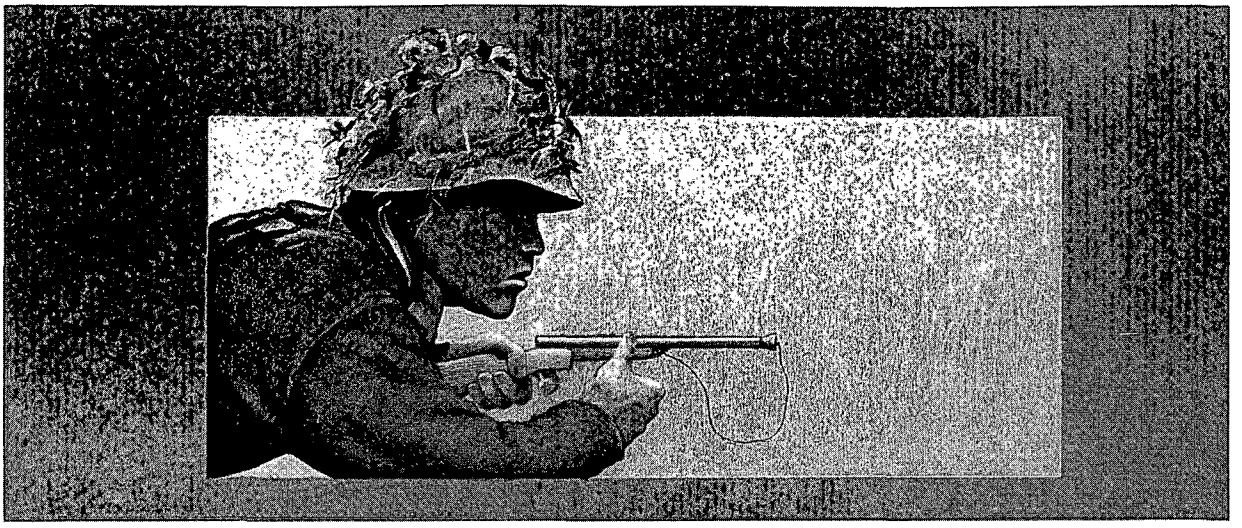

The Bull's-Eye of Disaster

by James Bond Stockdale

For over a decade now, it's been commonplace for our leaders to urge us to put Vietnam behind us. My wife, Sybil, and I were face to face with our good friend George Bush when he said it again at his Inauguration in January. The Congressional Medal of Honor Society has front row seats at these affairs, and I swallowed hard when during what I would call his "plea for unity" acceptance speech he said, "Surely, the statute of limitations on Vietnam has run out." I was not the only one in the Medal of Honor section who decided to take that remark with a grain of salt. New Nebraska Senator Bob Kerrey and I exchanged knowing glances.

In case you don't know, Bob Kerrey was a Navy SEAL team leader who lost a leg on a voluntary and highly risky midnight penetration of a VC island stronghold to abduct their political cadres for interrogation. In the pitch black melee, a hand grenade exploded right at Bob's feet. He refused medical treatment until his gang and their quarry were back down the high cliff, into the rubber boats, and away. Good work, but in hindsight, all for naught.

I think Bob and I and many of our cohorts think there is much more to be written and said before the nation puts that Indochina chapter of our history to bed. I *know* there is material yet to be released that belongs in the public record. The total Vietnam War story involves just too many fundamental breaks in our national integrity to be buried in the vault. It is a package of lessons for the current age, and for the future.

I find that World War II guys, and, of course, President Bush qualifies as a hero among them, sometimes dust off the Vietnam experience as a one-of-a-kind mixup in which our civilian and military leaders misjudged the nature of the problem, and once in, sank into an unexpected quagmire that was beyond almost anybody's practical control. From my study — and intuition — I find that impossible to believe.

I was there for ten years, and taking in data all the time — one year just flying, two flying heavy combat, and seven and a half in prison — *not* "languishing," *not* "sitting out the war," as used to be said when American POW's had Geneva Convention protection, but fighting a torture battle — four of those years from a solitary cell in a penitentiary, surreptitiously commanding a secret and tricky underground organization, while regularly picking the brain of the prison-system commissar who sat on the North Vietnamese Army's General Staff. Altogether, I've come to realize that this talk about "surprise" at the resistance we met — at least among our senior leaders on the Joint Chiefs of Staff — is sheer bunk.

Books lead me to believe that the war held scarcely any surprises for the informed military. Their relationship with McNamara's whiz kids (who took over planning and running the war) was sort of like that of my prison pal who had come out of a dog fight in a parachute as the back seat (radar guy) of an F-4, with his front seat (pilot). The truth of the matter was that their plane came apart not as a result of enemy gunfire but because of a midair collision with one of their wingmen — a very rare event in that war, I assure you. One day years later I was sitting in a Hanoi prison cellblock

James Bond Stockdale was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1976. With his wife, Sybil, he is the author of In Love and War. *This article is adapted from a speech he gave under the auspices of The Rockford Institute in April.*

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while my pal's pilot was describing to the rest of us his surprise, while in violent maneuvering against a division of MIG's, to feel the unexpected impact of a blindside midair! "No surprise, Boss," interrupted the popular back seater, smiling and shaking his head in the spirit of sardonic fly-boy humor. "I knew what to expect right after I heard your briefing in the ready room. The flight was briefed like a midair, and it was flown like a midair."

A joke (sort of), but it was no joke with the Vietnam War as a whole. *It* was planned like a midair, and flown like a midair: a perfect disaster. But the planners didn't have to go to prison. They didn't even have to fight. They didn't even know *how* to fight. They just knew how to "thread the needle"—how to get an army out there that would satisfy our elders' drive, The Establishment drive, people like Dean Acheson's and John McCloy's *Wise Men*'s drive—to meet Cold War verities, shackled sufficiently to keep the allies of the enemy below a high simmer, and our own general public in the dark and calm. No emotion, please. Early in the war Robert McNamara said: "The greatest contribution Vietnam is making is that it is developing an ability in the United States to fight a limited war, to go to war, without the necessity of arousing the public ire." Can you think of any action more inconsistent with the basic idea of a democracy than the launching of *the* ultimate public endeavor, the committing of a generation of its young men to battle, the quintessential emotional experience, under the guise of their merely acting out their parts in some new sort of sterile half-speed surgical intrusion and thus well enough served without the encouragement and support of the public sentiment?

Oh, there was no doubt in the minds of the insiders, or of those of us who were out there on the firing line before 1965, that a "land battle" was what was in the works. You notice that I said that the needle-threaders got an *army* out there and shackled it. Nobody who understood the problem wanted the US Army out there trying to win hearts and minds in the weeds—least of all the Joint Chiefs of Staff. After two years of study and God knows how many confrontations with the President's "defense intellectuals," our JCS's final formal recommendation (made in October 1964, just before "the" war shaping decisions were rendered by the Executive Department) hung in with the LeMay solution—to bomb Hanoi and Haiphong, back to the Stone Age if necessary; to keep the US Army out of the field except as a last resort; to "isolate" the battlefield and let the South Vietnamese have at it with the Communists in a fair fight. (There is data in the files that establish LeMay's rationale as not to glorify the Air Force, but to save the US Army from ruin.) Their plan, the JCS believed, best utilized America's military power, and best served her national purposes and well-being.

And take it from one who was there when the B-52's finally *did* bomb Hanoi for a few days eight years later: that would have done it. "The walls came tumbling down"—the loss of life, American *and* Vietnamese, was miniscule in comparison to the "land war" we bought into (at most, 1 percent of what was commonplace in World War II bombardments—100 per day in Hanoi vs. 50,000 a day at Dresden being a not-illegitimate contrast). The noisy Hanoi streets went absolutely silent. Their military officers were first thunderstruck, then obsequious, setting our guards to the unprecedented task of making the rounds of the cellblocks with hot coffee at dawn before the daily barrage started. Within two weeks, their national authorities were back at the negotiating table, and, in so many words, in the process of surrendering.

The Chiefs' "short war" recommendation of October 1964 was handed over to the young Establishment Intellectual LBJ had asked to draft his strategy. His name was William Putnam Bundy, Dean Acheson's son-in-law. (Insecure Johnson had to have that old-boy Ivy League prestige behind him.) And according to the "25 years after" books coming out now, it was William Bundy who was arbiter of most things crucial during the "war shaping" period. (It was he who in May 1964 had drafted a "fill in the blanks" Congressional Resolution that became the Tonkin Gulf Resolution after the events of early August of that year; it was he who cooled the JCS idea of "keeping the pressure on with follow-up raids" while the iron was hot after our reprisal air strikes of August 5; he was a leader among those who insisted on not bombing Hanoi and Haiphong, raising the ludicrous flag of caution for fear of a China that was trying to get into America's orbit during those very early Vietnam War years—the start of China's political turnaround that took Nixon's and Kissinger's insight to recognize and capitalize on a few years later; and according to a good book entitled *Four Stars*, which came out this spring, it was this same William Bundy who rejected the idea of a clean declaration of war, something that public sentiment would probably have supported in that fall of 1964—a "bright line test" that would have assured our deploying soldiers of the congressional and public support they deserved in exchange for laying their lives on the line. Bundy rejected it (says the book) to save LBJ "an embarrassing pre-election political headache in his peace-oriented campaign against Goldwater for President."

Admiral Lloyd Mustin appeared before William Bundy's war strategy working group as advocate for the Chiefs' "short war" plan in November 1964. His words tersely described the distillation of JCS thinking: "Instead of working to buttress the South Vietnamese government in order to defend itself, the United States should take stern actions against North Vietnam to make that defense needless." (Over the years, the Chiefs had collected lots of data, including the horror stories of Lieutenant Colonel John Paul Vann's unsuccessful attempts in '62 and '63 to motivate or teach the South Vietnamese to fight "Western style.") But the "short war" plan went down the tubes on December 1, 1964, in a formal meeting with LBJ and his principal advisors: Rusk, McNamara, the Bundys, Rostow, McCone, Ball, and Ambassador Maxwell Taylor. A campaign of reactive (tit for tat) gradualism won—the strategy of the game-theory advocates who claimed that if you titted for tat long enough, you could eventually convince your adversary that his cause was hopeless. (The "Prisoners' Dilemma" game.) It seemed a "safer" theory—and by its implicit restriction of options to almost *none* except the stationing of our Army units right down there in the jungle, it had the old "morality play" aspect of compassionate paternalism—our troops acting out the theme of those

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1950's books like *The Ugly American*, helping our friends help themselves at the grass roots level. "Limited War," they called it.

(If I sound cynical about grass roots support and "helping little people help themselves," I am skeptical about it from *both* the rational and emotional sides. Rationally, it is generally thought of as a poor utilization of our Army's fighting power. Our troops are *not* missionaries and to cast them in such roles is to get them into positions asking for the sort of abuse Sybil and I heard being poured on America at a conference in Paris a year ago last December. I can't forget the insults of the Parisian anticommunist Vietnamese. In so many words, these leading Vietnamese intellectuals, who had sponsored the South Vietnamese government, charged America with intruding into South Vietnam's internal affairs, and bringing about their country's descent into Communism. In short, they claimed America owed Vietnam another war. We got so close we got pinned with the blame from both sides.)

The reason I think this rehash and analysis is worthy of your time is that it exposes the insidious dangers of that gradualistic paternalism that is so attractive to the timid. It could happen again. Remember Winston Churchill's words in his introduction to *The Gathering Storm*?

> It is my purpose, as one who lived and acted in these days . . . to show how the malice of the wicked was reinforced by the weakness of the virtuous, how the councils of prudence and restraint may become the prime agents of mortal danger . . . and how the middle course, adopted from desires for safety and a quiet life may be found to lead direct to the bull's-eye of disaster.

It's hard to believe, now, but "Limited War" was a new expression in early 1965. There was lots of discussion about it—just like when its modern counterpart, "Low Intensity Conflict," was introduced a few years ago. Either can get confusing if you try to apply it to yourself as an individual combatant. In April 1965, a few months after our national Vietnam strategy had been decided, I was heading westward on the aircraft carrier *Oriskany*—starting my third eight-month cruise that would mainly involve flying missions over Vietnam. I was forty-one-years-old and had climbed to the top of Navy flying—Air Group Commander, senior combatant pilot on the ship. This was to be a full combat cruise (since we had left the United States we had heard about the Marines landing near Da Nang, and the start of the Rolling Thunder bombing campaign). Three things triggered a speech I gave to all my Air Group pilots a few days before we raised the Indochina coast. (The full text appears in Admiral Sharp's book, *Strategy for Defeat*.) The first trigger was informal chitchat among my squadron commanders about whether limited war required the same low altitude/high accuracy bomb drop patterns as regular war. "I heard some squadrons on other ships were thinking about pulling out high," some were saying. Second trigger: an easily detectable and understandable anxiety among my pilot population as a whole—85 percent of whom were facing their first combat. The majority (the juniors) were well educated, thoughtful, and sensitive—too young to remember the national fervor of World War II. (I still vividly remembered the whispered concern among several just like them aboard the carrier *Ticonderoga* the previous summer as we eyed the still-wet bomb damage assessment photos of the flaming wreckage of the Vinh oil storage yard following our reprisal raid of August 5. "Yes, sure enough, there are *bodies* among that rubble.") The third trigger: a letter from a bright and highly respected former commanding officer of mine, wishing me well on the one hand, and surprising me on the other by suggesting that I might give thought to laying off pressing for Code of Conduct conformance of prisoners—that it was, after all, a *regular* war document.

I'll quote myself just enough to give you the drift, and the tenor of the times:

> Where do you as a person, a person of awareness, refinement and education, fit into this "limited war," "measured response" concept? I want to level with you right now, so you can think it over here in mid-Pacific and not kid yourself into "stark realizations" over the target. Once you go "feet dry" over the beach, there can be nothing *limited* about your commitment. "Limited war" means to us that our target list has limits, our ordnance loadout has limits, our rules of engagement have limits, but that does *not* mean that there is anything "limited" about our personal obligation as fighting men to carry out assigned missions with all we've got. If you think it is right or sensible for a man, in the heat of battle, to apply something less than total *personal commitment*—equated perhaps to his idea of the proportion of *national* potential being applied, *you are wrong*. It's contrary to good sense about self-protection—half speed football is where you get your leg broken. It's contrary to human nature. So also is self-degradation. Don't think for a minute that the prisoner's Code of Conduct is just a "regular war" or "total war" document. It was written for *all* wars, and let it be understood that it applies with full force to this Air Group in this war. . . .
>
> If you don't agree with *all* the above, *right now* is the time to turn in your wings. It's much less damaging to your pride if you do it here in mid-Pacific now, as a clearly thought-out decision, than after you see your shipmates get shot up over the beach. . . .
>
> I hope I haven't made this too somber. I merely want to let you all know where we stand on Duty, Honor and Country. Secondly, I want to warn you all of excessive caution. A philosopher has warned us, that of all forms of caution, caution in love is the most fatal to true happiness. In the same way, I believe that "caution in war" can have a deleterious effect on your future self-respect, and in this sense, surely your future happiness. When that Fox Flag is two blocked on Yankee Station, you'll be an actor in a drama that you'll replay in your mind's eye for the rest of your life. Level with yourself now. Do your duty.

No one came forward to turn in his wings. By the time *Orinskany* returned to San Diego in December 1965, her

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pilots had earned a record total of decorations for flight heroism. Of the 120 pilots addressed in this talk, 13 did not return with the ship. Nine were killed in action and four, including myself, were shot down and taken prisoner.

On the *Oriskany*'s next cruise, during the summer of 1966, five more from my air group joined us in the Hanoi dungeons—their killed-in-action list higher yet than ours. And in the summer of 1967, still more prisoners, and still more lives and airplanes squandered running up and down the same restricted tracks in North Vietnam in that gradual escalation to nowhere. In four months of that 1967 cruise, the *Oriskany* had 40 percent of its deck load of airplanes shot out of the sky.

So much for "limited war"; so much for the pussyfooters and needle-threaders who wanted to finesse a war with game theory, without disturbing anybody important. I say to them what my North Vietnamese jailers frequently said to me: "The blood, the blood, is on *your* hands."

Those of us who entered prison early actually saw three different wars. The first lasted 3 years and 2 months—the war of reactive gradualism decided upon by LBJ and his jolly gang on December 1, 1964; the war that ran its course as described above. Then there was a 3 year 2 month "hiatus" war—like the "limited" war, practically as long as America's World War II—but no airplanes in the sky, absolutely no American actions that we could detect having any effect on us one way or another. It lasted from late '68 to late '71—I was in solitary for the first half of it, and I was brutalized more in 1969 than in any year in prison. Some don't like to hear this, but on the whole, life was easier for us in prison when America was bombing and hammering at their gates. To have our bombing "paused" was somehow considered contemptible. And then the old JCS "short war" loomed into view in late 1971—the mining of the harbors, the tactical bombing of military targets in Hanoi and Haiphong, and the climax: seemingly endless streams of B-52's bombing Hanoi and Haiphong military complexes starting on that wondrous night of December 18, 1972. In 11 days, North Vietnam was shut down completely.

That was commitment. A long time coming, and in hindsight, perhaps too late for an emotionally drained America. But for what it's worth, I believe if the October 1964 JCS "short war" plan had been accepted and put in motion during that spring of 1965—a move that would have been perfectly natural and totally possible—then we would have a free and secure South Vietnam today; we would have about 40,000 fewer headstones in Arlington Cemetery right now; and we would have all been home before Christmas of 1966. What is known as the 60's—antiwar disruption and all—would never have happened.

How did we get so screwed up? The American government tried to do something the Founding Fathers knew would never work: to send ("sneak" may be a better word) armies to war without a solid consensus of public support. Hear out two of my most trusted friends:

Ross Perot, a savvy patriot in everybody's book, says, "If we didn't learn anything else from Vietnam, it is that you don't commit your men to the battlefield unless you commit the American people first. They fell just as dead in Vietnam as they did on Omaha Beach in Normandy. First commit

At the Van Gogh Museum

by Tom Disch

The lesson here? It's very clear: we can
By making friends with you endure the whole
Mad scramble of life, the shoving and the shoveling,
Knowing through this friendship that every year
Will yield its blossoms and its beards, its spears
Of jade green thrusting from gnarled brown bulbs,
Its saturations of humanity's and flowers'
Insistence on being *seen*, an insistence we must learn
After a time to put by, dropping the blossoms,
Cropping off an ear, because you, after all,
Are near—as a wind, a whisper, a glint in the eye
Of Baby Camille Roulin. Unhappiness
Is sure, but surer perhaps for the poor
Living far from the decorous interiors of Paris,
Their pain unrecognized as such, blessed
Only by their nearer proximity to you, who are
The last divinity left: Death. Dark blue Death
Stark behind the scumblings of the clouds,
Implicit in all greens, mocker of all *machers*,
Confounder of lust. All the golds of rich September
Turn to khaki at your touch, and lamplight
Is a feeble contradiction, books a fiction,
Flesh a fable that can only be recalled
In a dead Christ after Delacroix, in Rembrandt's
Livid and unrisen Lazarus. The brushstrokes
Layer brushstrokes like an infinite regression
Of quotation marks telling us what men
Were once reported to believe. Just so,
In the Nieuwe Kerk our art historians
Discover crude Gothic angels beneath the reforming
Whitewash of the Protestants; just so, when Vincent
Wiped away each canvas's white lie,
He found the sooty windows of his youth, the same
Warped faces and lightless spaces that first
Acquainted him with you—Prussian blue,
Phthalocyanine, cerulean Death!

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the nation; then commit the troops."

Fred Weyand, Combat General in Vietnam and former Chief of Staff of the US Army, says, "When the Army is committed, the American people are committed, and when the American people lose their commitment it is futile to try to keep the Army committed."

The Founding Fathers drove a spike into the Constitution they framed, a spike aimed specifically at that crucial need for public commitment, insuring that no soldier marches off to a war that becomes an expendable sideshow of a Washington power struggle: the provision that *only the Congress can declare war*. My constitutional law professor friends at Stanford tell me that the debates at the Constitutional Convention revealed two basic underlying reasons for that clause. The first stemmed from a consensus among the Framers that *no one person*, not the President nor any other

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The excuse for the Tonkin Gulf Resolution was made into headlines that read like "North Vietnamese Torpedo Boats Make Midnight Sneak Attack on American Destroyers." I had the best seat in the house to watch the event, and our destroyers were just shooting at phantom targets—there were no PT boats there. Not a conspiracy, but a hysterical mix-up. I reported that, and Washington received it promptly, but we went to war anyway.

◆

in government, was to have the authority to lead the United States into war. Thus Congress was given the obligation (*not* the optional honor) of being the watchdog in this matter. (There was debate about just making it the Senate, but the Framers decided they needed a broader base.) And there was a second reason to put Congress on the hook: it was decided that unless it unequivocally authorized a war at the outset, the Congress was a good deal more likely later to undercut the effort, leaving a situation that satisfied neither the allies we induced to rely on us, nor our men who fought and sometimes died.

I think it is fair to say that generally speaking, since World War II and our subsequent discontinuance of declarations of war, things have not gone well. And we are all sick of these arguments about what is a war, and what is a prolonged campaign, and how do you know in advance. Yes, and tired of having to agree to the obvious: that it's neat that the President can pull off these successful flash-in-the-pan operations like the Libyan raid, and the Grenada rescue, and, too, the successful Persian Gulf presence, without the encumbrances of prior debate. But I don't think it is any sort of a legal challenge to write a descriptive paragraph that clearly separates out the future Koreas and Vietnams from future Grenadas or Persian Gulfs. Basically, we're not talking about naval and air actions or marine team landings, we're talking about the United States Army in combat on foreign soil. And I think such expeditions (overseas wars) should be *declared* or not fought at all.

One of the obfuscating factors in getting this hammered out is the ambivalent stance of Congress. My law professor friends have drawn out for me examples of what they call the typical congressman's "studied ambiguity" on the subject. It's a fact that today the artful dodging of controversial questions is the road to reelection. They say that during Vietnam and in some conflicts since, Congress has shown itself to be consistently unwilling to end the fighting—in fact quite willing to continue to fuel it: "anything for the boys overseas!!"—but at the same time quite resourceful in scattering the landscape with rationalizations whereby the Congress could continue to claim that "it wasn't really *its* war." In general, the modern congressman is quite likely to be happy to let the President call the shots on war and peace while he devotes himself to the construction of his private political bomb shelter.

I have an interesting study of different wartime congressmen's reactions to queries about their views on the Vietnam War in the light of their signatures on the Tonkin Gulf Resolution:

> —"prevent further aggression?"; "I was sure they told me they meant only aggression against our armed forces!"
>
> "Oh, that was only to handle further provocations against destroyers in the Tonkin Gulf."
>
> "I was told we were just going along with one of old LBJ's international bluffs."
>
> Foreign Relations Committee report: "Although it can be interpreted to authorize full-scale war, that was not our intent *at the time*."

Every day our newspapers report the details of some squabble over legislative vs. executive control of foreign involvement. They are competing for the prestige of running it. I'm talking about the other end of the stick—the obligation to take responsibility for it *and stick with it* when it turns to worms. If you want to see that flip-flop acted out in spades, come to a prison camp. When there's reprisal and torture being meted out, some prisoner officers, senior and thus responsible, will shirk all leadership duties because they know they'll be spotlighted, hammered, and exposed to bad press at home. But let the heat come off, and those same rankers who had been cowering in their cells for months, even years—not answering wall taps of those seeking guidance, dodging their responsibility of command—suddenly surface and present their credentials to lead the homecoming tickertape parade. That happened. Everybody wants the prestige of control when the heat's off, but many shuck it like a hot potato when the fat is in the fire.

American congressmen—Vietnam antiwar congressmen who were lengthening the conflict even as American bodies were piling up—were able to get off easy with their constituents in spite of their signatures on the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. The American public didn't hold them responsible because there was just enough ambiguity in the air about just exactly where this resolution (new word) fit in.

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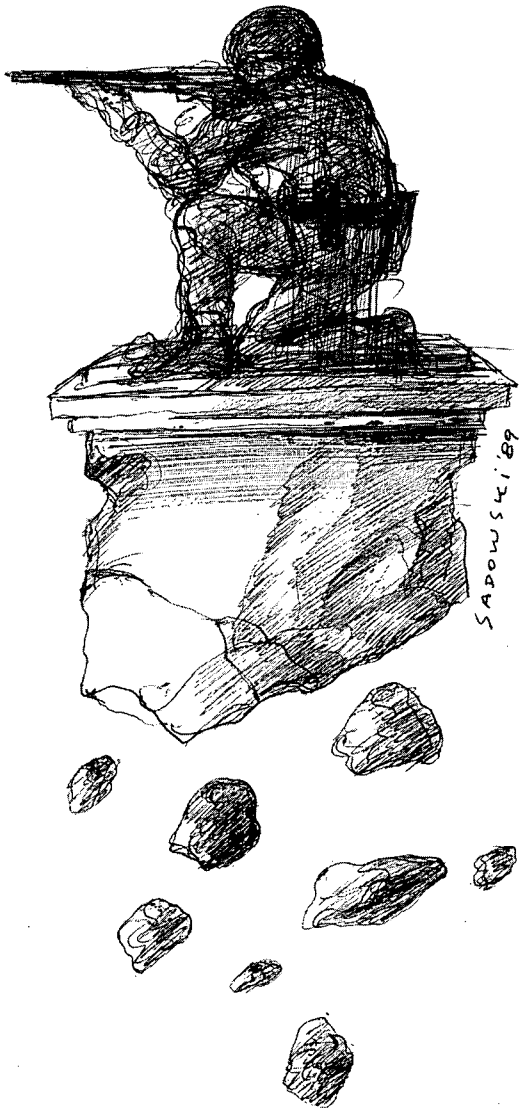
But who can forget how quick they were to endorse this "engine" of the war that LBJ demanded in the heady times of summer 1964. The House of Representatives passed it unanimously after a total of 40 minutes of discussion. The Senate had two diehards and it took 8 hours and 40 minutes—but, as you might know, before a Senate Chamber that was less than one-third full.

I have an aside on this. Sentiment rules the world, said Napoleon—and those on the scene when important events take place have a good vantage point to see the degree to which sentiment and image have the final say over facts. The excuse for the Tonkin Gulf Resolution was made into headlines that read like "North Vietnamese Torpedo Boats Make Midnight Sneak Attack on American Destroyers." As most of you know, I had the best seat in the house to watch that event, and our destroyers were just shooting at phantom targets—there were no PT boats there. Not a conspiracy, but a hysterical mix-up. I reported that, and Washington received it promptly, but we went to war anyway. Those early headlines, based on Washington's *word* on what happened, set the tone for the reaction of the whole country, and two days later LBJ got his blank check for whatever kind of war he wanted—*and* a magnificent boost in the popularity polls for his upcoming election. But when we pilots who were out there really snickered was when we read the superimaginative graphic accounts of the sea battle in the news magazines a week later. If you have old *Newsweeks*, *Time* magazines, or *Life* magazines of that time, look at the stories, and drawings, and remember that there was nothing there but black water and American fire power. And then, contrast that 1964 public reaction to a *nonevent* to that 1973 reaction to a *real* event, to a magnificently handled de-arming of our enemy's capital city, with pinpoint bombing of rail yards, transportation facilities, and missile sites, and an all-time low civilian casualty rate. How did our Congress react? In the middle of it, one of our senators said on NBC TV that it was "the most murderous aerial bombardment in the history of the world." Headlines screamed it was a "Christmas bombing"—I was there and not one bomb was dropped on Christmas. It was billed as a "holocaust," a carpet bombing—I was there and not one bomb was dropped downtown. But by 1973, the country had come to such a state that a vocal minority of our citizens who by that time *did not want America to win that war* were able to prevent the enforcement of the agreement that those 11 days of bombings had extracted from the North Vietnamese government.

What a mess! High-handed entry into the war, distrust of the JCS, mismanagement of the battle, squandering of the public trust, 58,000 of our soldiers dead with nothing to show for it! This could happen again. And we are asked to close the books and put the Vietnam War behind us? Sociologist Charles Moskos at Northwestern University predicts that won't happen until the last of the generation that the old guard mangled are quiet in their graves—in the year 2030.

In those years, and perhaps now in some quarters of our government, the ideas of "declaration" and "mobilization" seem to be thought to bring with them the idea of *moral approbation* of the project—whereas the undeclared effort,



especially one not even "worthy" of national mobilization, is less official, less real, less demanding of our internal sympathies. (It's like when fifty thousand soldiers die in a *national effort* it's bad press. When fifty thousand soldiers die in an undeclared "police action," it's just "the breaks.") After losing out with his "short war" pitch, Army Chief of Staff Harold Johnson (a very interesting man with whom I identify) made a push for national mobilization, not only for the manpower but for the public involvement, the public commitment.

(Harold Johnson was an ex-POW of World War II who made the Bataan Death March, and who described his time behind bars as being "in a great laboratory of human behavior." I've never heard it better stated. He has been described as a skeptic, dedicated to integrity, hating absolutes, distrustful of easy solutions, dead set against US troop involvement in Vietnam. He said the Joint Chiefs were *never* asked to vote one way or another before they were sent in—the civilians said "go" and they went—and thus was understandably heard to refer to the Department of Defense as the Department of Deceit.)

Anyway, the key player who turned off General Harold

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Johnson's mobilization proposal (on July 25, 1965) was ex-Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg. He voiced the opinion that a "mobilized" Vietnam War would make his image as our UN Ambassador more *tainted* than would an "unmobilized" Vietnam War.

Well, I say then, from the national commitment viewpoint, that's all the more reason for the soldier to want his war declared. That's the only way he can be confident that the government really *means* it.

The worst part of all this is that in the undeclared case, it's such a *natural* thing for our very Congress (being unaccountable to the public) to turn out to be an after-the-fact agent that nullifies our fighting men's best efforts as an expendable miscue, a discard from the Washington power game. The Framers had it figured correctly. Our Constitution had to be written so as to protect our fighting men from shedding blood in pointless exercises while a dissenting Congress strangled the effort. But what has evolved in this modern age, apparently to everybody's satisfaction but that of those fighting men, affords them no such protection.

I've heard just too many decorated veteran warriors from Vietnam say, "Our government better figure out some way to make it clear that they mean business next time, or I'm through with soldiering." They are *sick* of being told that their lives have to be provisionally committed to a half-baked plan because it's the only way the President can, in the national interest, get around adverse congressional sentiment. They shouldn't have to take that.

These men were brought up pledging allegiance to the flag of a United States of America, which from its beginnings was committed to a separation of powers. From maturity they knew the strengths of this form of government that balances the legislature against the presidency. They also sense, as did our Founding Fathers and the six generations that followed, that our government's weakness is a tendency to become fickle when the point of no return has passed, when the fat is in the fire and the troops are in the field. But over these generations a national confidence had grown up, particularly through those personal commitments, that bright line assurance, documented by congressional declarations of war. If in the post-Vietnam United States the soldier is just to be told that in modern times opinions change, that he should be prepared to have commitments dropped, that he should do his job in the field and never mind that he will be fighting for a government constantly doing a balancing act against a nasty opposition from within, this will simply *not* do. Soldiers will march off to their deaths only so long as they don't feel they have to die alone for what will be abandoned causes.

I'm not usually on the stump. The woods are full of experts who can probably put me down in nothing flat. As the saying goes, "I don't know Washington."

But I do know some American history, and how the Framers' model for this country was that most admirable Republic of Rome. During the formation of our government, when constitutional issues were being debated, the famous and not famous on both sides of the issues wrote under Roman pseudonyms (Publius, Camillus, Brutus, Cassius). George Washington was so taken with the character of Cato the Younger in Joseph Addison's 1713 play *Cato* that he made the Roman republican his role model. Washington loved the theater and went to see *Cato* numerous times, and even had it performed for his troops at Valley Forge despite a congressional resolution that plays were inimical to republican virtue. Lines from the play can be found verbatim not only in Washington's private correspondence but in his farewell address.

The Roman Republic and its ethos, particularly during its first three hundred years, were a natural model for our Founders' dreams. Like ours, their republic emerged from monarchy; like ours, the people of its early years were mostly free farmers. And although war had been the most dramatic feature of the life of the early republican Romans, their historians described how the development of the Roman character was formed by institutions with which our revolutionary forebears could identify: the family, religion, the moral code. The Greek historian Polybius (who died when the republic was a mere 386 years old, before it had become an empire and then corrupt—and incidentally a man whose hobby was cryptography and the very man who devised that quadratic tap code we decided to use in the Hanoi prisons) praised the Roman government as the best in the world and described the honesty of the Roman people as superior to that of his own countrymen. Their army, as a republic, was the most successful military organization in history, never lost a war, and brought a city state a mere 20 miles square to the status of conqueror of the whole Mediterranean world.

But they, as we all must, eventually fell. They fell of infighting as an empire, from a general lack of public virtue, from selfishness and inconsiderateness. I just don't want to see that process speeded up here. Heed the letter from deployed soldier Marcus Flavinius, centurion in the 2nd Cohort of the Augusta Legion, to his highly placed cousin, Turtullus, at home in Rome:

> We had been told, on leaving our native soil, that we were going to defend the sacred rights conferred on us by so many of our citizens settled overseas, so many years of our presence, so many benefits brought by us to populations in need of our assistance and our civilization.
>
> —We were able to verify that all this was true, and, because it was true, we did not hesitate to shed our quota of blood, to sacrifice our youth and our hopes. We regretted nothing, but whereas we over here are *inspired* by this frame of mind, I am told that in Rome factions and conspiracies are rife, that treachery flourishes, and that many people in their uncertainty and confusion lend a ready ear to the dire temptations of relinquishment and vilify our action.
>
> —I cannot believe that all this is true, and yet recent wars have shown how pernicious such a state of mind could be and to where it could lead.
>
> —Make haste to reassure me, I beg you, and tell me that our fellow citizens understand us, support us and *protect* us as we ourselves are *protecting* the glory of the Empire.
>
> —If it should be otherwise, if we should have to leave our bleached bones on these desert sands in vain, then *beware* the *anger* of the Legions!

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Arms and the Man:

Clint Eastwood as Hero and Filmmaker

by E. Christian Kopff

A nation lives by its myths and heroes. Many societies have survived defeat and invasion, even political and economic collapse. None has survived the corruption of the picture it has of itself. High art and popular art are not in competition here. Both may and do help citizens decide what they are and admire. In our age, however, high art has given up speaking to the body of its fellow citizens. It devotes itself to technical displays that appeal and can only appeal to other technicians. The greatest art, high or popular, aims at speaking to a whole society. The group may not be large in number, but it is felt to be a whole. Aeschylus was composing for only a hundred thousand or so Athenian citizens, while Stephen King writes for millions of people, but one was trying to speak to everybody in his city, while the other has a carefully marketed target audience that is and is viewed as being only a fraction of his nation.

Hollywood in the days of the great studios tried to express a national feeling. This effort collapsed with the decline of the studio system in the 60's. It is striking how many watchable films, along with a few masterpieces, the old system produced compared with the dated products of the 60's. Yet the 60's did produce a filmmaker who is committed to films that both work as popular entertainment and speak to the American people. No real understanding of the *oeuvre* of Clint Eastwood is possible unless the viewer sees this continuing effort to present America to itself.

Eastwood's famous chipped tooth and limited acting range had slowed down his career until he was cast as Rowdy Yates in the television series *Rawhide*. Eastwood's youthful good looks and sullen passion won the hearts of the teenagers who were becoming the majority of the nation in those years. (The show is still syndicated all over America.) Based on this success, Eastwood's agent got him a part in a European movie, a Western directed by an Italian with an Italian villain.

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A quarter of a century later, that villain, Gian Maria Volonté, is considered one of Italy's premier actors. The director, Sergio Leone, has just passed away, honored as the creator of one of the most popular sub-genres in film history, the "spaghetti Western." It is an education to watch Leone grow with *Per un pugno di dollari* (1964), hit his stride in *Per qualche dollaro in piu'* (1965) and go on to create *Il buono, il brutto e il cattivo* (1967). I have little patience for his later, critically acclaimed movies. They resemble nothing so much as expensive imitations by someone who has studied Sergio Leone movies, but cannot understand what made them work. The original trilogy is slow paced, but tense with excitement, superficially immoral but in fact deeply ethical. Above all, it has Eastwood. The casting was as inspired as it was on that distant day when John Ford got to direct John Wayne for the first time in *Stagecoach*. The men and the hour had met.

What Leone was doing needed Eastwood's strengths and could bypass his weaknesses. There was not much dialogue, but Leone needed a strong screen presence that was tough, that had a sense of humor and remained sympathetic. Critics scorned the products and Italian Marxists explained that the trilogy and the many successive spin-offs were a Christian Democratic plot to make the Italian people forget about the economic troubles of the end of the Economic Miracle of the 50's. Ordinary people flocked to see them and Clint Eastwood's screen persona was born, created by Leone's genius and Eastwood's own squinting charisma.

Leone's vision of the American West was of a place freed from the traditions and constraints of the Old World, open to incredible cruelty and violence, but saved, after all, by an individual with a moral center and a sense of humor. Critics noted the violence, horrific by the standards of the early 60's, but forgot that even if virtue was not always rewarded, honor and a sense of humor always triumphed over rootless evil. Eastwood never forgot what he learned from the Italian about pacing and humor, but especially he was struck by Leone's vision of the world as the American West.

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The late 60's were not a good time for either man. Eastwood was cast in a number of Westerns, watchable now only because they include him. The nadir was the incredible catastrophe of *Paint Your Wagon* (1969), a musical Western that combined appalling immorality with unbelievably bad singing. Eastwood's walk through a forest singing, "I talk to the trees," may be the musical low point of a decade that listened to Herman's Hermits. The waste of money appalled Eastwood as much as the aimlessness of his career, and he finally founded Malpaso Productions and signed contracts to produce his own movies with complete artistic control.

How the critical world howled with laughter at that proviso. Eastwood proceeded to make a series of movies, sexy teasers like *Play Misty for Me* (1971), Westerns, and cop movies. It was the last that won him the most enduring fame and that alienated permanently the Hollywood elite. Today after nearly two decades we can see *Dirty Harry* (1971) for what it is, a film masterpiece, directed by the great Don Siegel, the most influential work of popular art since *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Although Don Siegel is a very different director from Sergio Leone, the Italian's vision of

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Bronco Billy's Wild West Show is Eastwood's vision of America. In one sense, it is a weird congeries of misfits, deserters, and losers. Bronco Billy, however, gives to these people the chance to create the world they need to live in. In fact, none of the members of the show is authentic. Not even the Indian is a real Indian.

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the American West can be felt in the film's ethical tensions.

Eastwood's Westerns were made in the Leone mold. In fact, his Westerns were the true continuation of Leone's project, as the Italian's later movies became increasingly bizarre and out of touch with popular feeling. As in *For a Few Dollars More*, an act of immorality is avenged after a long time by a tough but honest hero. The humor that was so essential for Leone's first trilogy (and risks taking over *The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly*) is developed and matures. Already with *Joe Kidd* (1972) we begin to see the admiration for the hard-working ordinary competent person contrasted with the immoral rich and the professional revolutionary. It is a theme found in the *Dirty Harry* movies. Even so, *The Outlaw Josey Wales* came as a surprise.

Directed by Eastwood himself, *Josey Wales* (1976) was based on real incidents, the massacre of surrendering Confederate soldiers by Union armies at the end of the Civil War. The title of the movie is dripping irony. Wales has lost his family to Yankee raiders, as we see in staccato flashbacks used with a power and control that Eastwood has not been able to recover. Wales refuses to ride down to surrender to the Yankees, and so he witnesses the massacre that ends the surrender. He charges and rescues one friend and becomes an outlaw. Fleeing the relentless pursuers, he gathers around him a motley family of those who have suffered from the Union, including an Indian and some women who have lost their husbands and fathers. Finally he establishes a new homestead and turns to face his tormenters. Directed with restraint and considerable humor, *Josey Wales* is now recognized as one of Eastwood's best movies, but he has been forgiven for it just as little as for *Dirty Harry*. There is no clearer statement that in America, ordinary people can create a community without giving in to history's victors.

The picture of a true community that survives and prospers while at odds with the official successful society is found again in *Bronco Billy* (1980), Eastwood's most successful comedy and yet one of his most serious films. Bronco Billy's Wild West Show is Eastwood's vision of America. In one sense, it is a weird congeries of misfits, deserters, and losers. Bronco Billy, however, gives to these people the chance to create the world they need to live in. In fact, none of the members of the show is authentic. Not even the Indian is a real Indian. They are all fakes. They have, however, created their own personas, and in the final scenes, the Show performs in a tent made up of American flags sewn by lunatics, and Eastwood tells the little pards to live up to the American ideals of law and order. The affirmation of his country and its mores manages to be splendidly absurd and deeply moving at the same time.

Fifteen years ago the Greek scholar Jean-Pierre Vernant said of Greek tragedy that it ceased to use the tragic hero as a model and treated him as a problem. The same change took place in the popular art of the 50's and 60's, most strikingly in John Ford's later Westerns, *The Searchers* and *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, and in John Le Carré's spy novels. The popularity of Sergio Leone's Westerns, with their violence and superficial cynicism, can be placed in this context. Most of the products of this time are dated. Who can watch *Alfie* or *Morgan* anymore? Typical of the age were the scenes added to *Patton* to cut the general down to size when it became obvious that George C. Scott's *tour de force* performance had made the man too heroic.

Eastwood's contribution was to show how the new problematic hero could be rescued, could be made a model again. As in so many other ways, *Dirty Harry* is crucial. The early scenes of the movie consistently show Harry breaking the rules of sensitive, caring Liberal America. We are deeply into the movie before we recognize with Harry's partner that Harry is "dirty" because he is competent and so can be used to do all the dirty jobs. Similarly in *Bronco Billy* we learn only slowly that the Wild West Show is a Potemkin Village for people who are not really cowboys and Indians, but shoe salesmen and deserters. It is nearly the end before we discover that creation of a new world by people fleeing from a failed old world is the definition of America.

Pale Rider (1985) is a typically misunderstood Eastwood masterpiece. Eastwood has often borrowed key scenes from important earlier movies, but he had never attempted a complete *mimesis* of an earlier movie. Here he takes *Shane* and refilms it with an Eastwood avenger in the lead. Unlike *High Plains Drifter* (1973), where a corrupt community is destroyed by the avenger, here the hero's revenge saves a community of miners, who face destruction at the hands of

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a corrupt rich man who is practicing strip-mining.

Eastwood's admiration for *Shane* is easy to understand. Alan Ladd is a man without family who saves not only a community but also a family in the face of temptations to use violence and to steal another man's wife. That the family and the community are saved by a man who has been stripped of both is a constant Eastwood theme. Dirty Harry's wife was killed in a meaningless accident with a drunken driver. Josey Wales's family was destroyed by Union raiders. Bronco Billy shot his wife when he caught her in bed with his best friend. ("What did you do to him?" asks Sondra Locke. "Nothing," Billy replies. "He was my best friend.")

It is here that the motifs of epic unite with the generic conventions of the Western. Eastwood's heroes are Vergilian. Like Aeneas they have been stripped of family and city so that they may lead others to a new home and a new community. It is no wonder that *Josey Wales* and *Bronco Billy*, where these motifs are clearest, are also Eastwood's most successful films artistically. (Naturally this is not meant to detract from the brilliance of 1988's *Bird*, easily the best directed film of the year, *pace* Hollywood's criminal indifference.)

These themes unite most perfectly in the final scene of *Dirty Harry*. Eastwood confronts an enemy whose madness, *furor*, will destroy society unless he is stopped, as Aeneas confronts Turnus at the end of the *Aeneid*. Harry has stopped Andy Robinson, the Scorpio Killer, from hurting the children in a school bus he hijacked, as Aeneas was not able to stop Turnus from killing young Pallas. Although Turnus pleads for mercy, Aeneas knows that it is too late. Harry instead gives the Scorpio Killer a chance. The *Aeneid* ends with the death of Turnus. Not so *Dirty Harry*. After disposing of the Scorpio Killer, Harry takes out his badge and throws it away, then slowly walks back as the camera sweeps upward to show us the hustle and bustle of the society that Harry will no longer risk his life for.

The discarding of the badge and the leaving of the spineless society is a direct *mimesis* of the end of *High Noon*. At some stage the hero will turn away from weakness and corruption and devote himself to creating his own community. That community may contain elements of the absurd, as in *Josey Wales* and *Bronco Billy*. The absurdity, however, adds piquancy to man's stumbling search for honesty and honor. The hero can no longer take refuge in his situation as a problem. He must recover the harder and admittedly somewhat absurd task of becoming again a model for healthy and honest people.

The dream of the West involves a frightened town, terrorized by corruption and a guilty secret. That dream also contains the promise of the frontier. It is a frontier in the human mind and will, accessible to everyone with the courage and the honesty to move out of corruption and weakness. Honesty and courage, leading to creativity, are their own reward. They give meaning to an individual and to a nation. No Academy Award can add to their importance.

In Eastwood's films, the American hero has ceased to be a problem and has become a model. The Man With No Name is free to choose a name, Bronco Billy or Josey Wales, and so are we. ◇

A Galop for Cesar Franck

by Tom Disch

1.

Who is, *mon cher chasseur maudit*,
  The biggest shark in all the sea?
The carnivore to end all carnivores?
  I know it isn't me.

Although I feel I must be near
  The end of the food chain.
You see my net? You see my spear?
  Be careful: I'm insane.

I hear you stir, I leap aside.
  You lunge; I feint; you cry!
You come for me, but I've denied
  Your god and you must die.

2.

  Our conductors
look, for the most part, like businessmen,
  and, like businessmen,
they can unleash titanic forces.
  I am not musical—
can only dance, i.e., pretend to be
  propelled by the beat,
and that not well. But then George Szell
  is not himself
titanic. There is a force beneath
  the music we understand,
and composers themselves, those supreme
  human beings,
were, like the rest of us, the servants
  of its commands.
Hear it! whirling through the world,

  exultant; damned.

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High Times

The Late 60's in New York

by Katherine Dalton

As 1969 rolled around and the decade was ending, I was six years old and living in a temperate Southern city a thousand miles from New York. Conflict came from wanting to stretch my feet into my brother's half of the backest-back of our fake wood-sided turquoise station wagon; Vietnam had no meaning for me. I must have sat on my Dad's lap as he watched the news, but I don't remember the "living room war." All I have are blurry memories of first grade. My idea of pill-popping was half an orange-flavored child's aspirin. I was a 36-inch-high square; I was out of it.

Somewhere out there were the Columbia student strike, the Harlem protests, the antiwar flag burnings, women's lib, problems in the schools, the riots at the Democratic Convention in Chicago, the King memorials; but not at my house. Remember that Richard Nixon was elected President in 1968, and even though he just squeezed through on the popular vote, and even though, yes, it probably would have been Bobby Kennedy if he hadn't been assassinated, still, a year that elected Dick Nixon was not a year of real political revolution. The middle class was unmobilized. (A letter from a Mrs. Mildred Dodge of Sylvania, Ohio, that ran in *Life* in '68 read: "Thank you for bringing us the wholesome, encouraging and beautiful picture of youth embodied in the Nixon-Eisenhower engagement." Richard Nixon's daughter Julie was to get married to David Eisenhower in December. "Such a sad contrast to the poor, lost children living in caves!")

But in certain pockets out there in the wider world beyond my backyard, in the universities and bigger cities, it was a revolution, all right—a cultural and sexual revolution in this decade when lowbrow became highbrow and highbrows like Susan Sontag defended the switch, when the subculture became the culture, and the culture purposely ran amok.

Tom Wolfe, referring to his 1968 book *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, told an interviewer:

"Everything I learned about what [Ken] Kesey and his group had been doing kept leading to something else, into more involved things. At one point I thought I'd never finish—I was reading books on brain psychology, on religion, on sociology, books on psychology, cognitive psychology, all sorts of things.

"I was gradually coming to the realization that this was in a way a curious, very bizarre, advance guard of this whole push towards self-realization, and all these things that people are trying to avoid facing up to as the main concern. I think it's very comforting to be able to say that we've got the same old problems: we've got war, we've got poverty.

"That way we don't have to see that the main problem—if you want to call it that—is that people are free all of a sudden; they're rich and they're fat and they're free."

In 1968 Wolfe was already sporting those white suits. New York had two favorite sons running for President: Bobby Kennedy and Nelson Rockefeller. Joe Namath and the Jets won the AFL title in December. Poet Marianne Moore was alive and well and living in Ft. Green, Brooklyn,

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Katherine Dalton is managing editor of Chronicles. *From 1984 to 1988 she lived in New York City. An earlier version of this piece appeared in* Metro.

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where she would answer the door with pepper in her hand, ready to blind a possible attacker. Stephen Sondheim was doing word puzzles for the fledgling magazine *New York*. The newspapers were 10 cents. You could get a studio apartment in Manhattan for somewhere between $100-$250. You could get a bag of heroin uptown for around $3 to $5, which is also what it would cost you to see Joan Baez at the Fillmore East.

It's funny to look back and see how old some of the heroes of that youth culture were. Ken Kesey, with his *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and acid tests and American flag tooth, was 33. Abbie Hoffman, who'd said "never trust anyone over 30," was himself 34. Warhol was 40-something, Allen Ginsberg was 42, Norman Mailer was 45. (He published *Armies of the Night* in '68, but he'd had his first big success with *The Naked and the Dead* 20 years before.) Timothy Leary was 48. Leonard Bernstein, with his benefit for the Black Panthers ahead of him, was turning 50.

These were the days when the black flag of anarchy was flying over the Brooklyn Academy of Music as the Living Theater performed there (in the nude, and encouraging their audience to fly); when New York was "a small town" and in most neighborhoods you could walk around at 3 A.M. and be perfectly safe; when during one winter, at least, if you wanted to you could really live in Central Park. America was going to start from ground zero and build a New Society; from that utopia we somehow ended up with Watergate, the oil crisis, the BeeGees, and Mr. Goodbar.

More than one person has observed that what politicized young people in the 60's was the single burning issue of the draft. No war, no 60's. But we forget that for some people — and not just six-year-olds — their oblivion extended even to Vietnam. For her and her circle, says Cheryl Terry, then a model for Wagner and Ford, "Somewhere in the background we knew that there was a war, but it was almost as though we were living in a time capsule; we were so untouched by it. I never once remember anybody having a serious discussion about the war except to say we should get out or we should stay in. We didn't have a political conscience. We were totally unaware of it. It was all across *The New York Times* every day, but our big thing was to laugh at the world and not to trust anyone over 30."

As for "anarchists" like the late Abbie Hoffman, to be taken seriously was the last thing any of them wanted. Their lack of seriousness, or coherency, was in fact the point. "It is impossible for me to describe our 'ideology,' for we simply didn't have one," wrote Raymond Mungo, who helped run the Liberation News Service, a clearinghouse for the underground press. "We never subscribed to a code of conduct or a clearly conceptualized Idea Society, and the people we chose to live with were not gathered together on the basis of any intellectual commitment to socialism, pacifism, anarchism, or the like. They were people who were homeless, could survive on perhaps five dollars a week in spending money, and could tolerate the others in the house."

Abbie Hoffman told an interviewer that, being miffed one night that a police inspector wouldn't arrest him ("I kept telling him to bust me, and he kept saying I hadn't done anything"), he looked around "and saw this display case, full of, like, Little League trophies," the inspector's favorite thing there in the station house. "And I just slammed into it.

"It was my favorite bust," Hoffman said, "because it was so existential."

Fred Eberstadt, a photographer then working for *Life* and *Vogue*, says, "In the early days at least there were few things more fun than marches. I went to a number of peace marches and black solidarity marches. I don't mean to say they weren't worthwhile, they probably were, but . . . it's also true they were fun. It was kind of collegiate."

He and his friends also used to go bail people out of jail all the time. One night when he went to bail out a friend who'd gotten busted at a protest at the Women's House of Detention (then in Greenwich Village), he was surprised to find out the sit-in had been to legalize prostitution. "This girl was really quite a feminist, and I said, 'How do you square legal prostitution with your point of view about feminism and antipornography?' She said, 'Well, I didn't really know what it was all about. I'm so used to joining any demonstration I see that I just sat down where everybody else did.' That was what it was for a lot of us," Eberstadt continues. "Whatever the demonstration was, we'd join."

The strike at Columbia was also typical. It was sort of about Columbia's continued support of the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA), which was doing research for the war; sort of about Columbia's building of its new gym in Morningside Park in Harlem, which would have separate and unequal facilities for the community's use; sort of about university president Grayson Kirk's edict forbidding any

LIBERAL ARTS

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN ACTION

The principle of the thing too-perfectly understood by an unfortunate woman at Northern Illinois University:

"Obtaining a position with falsified records is an unusual occurrence, but it happened when a new assistant director of affirmative action for the NIU Office of Affirmative Action was hired in January. . . . [Vivian] Hammoud's credentials state that she completed two years of law school as of Spring 1988 at the State University of New York in Buffalo. However, records from the New York Supreme Court state that she failed out of SUNY law school twice, and then sued for readmission. She lost the case in May 1986.

"Hammoud also claimed to have earned a master's degree from [the University of Michigan] in 1978 and a doctoral degree in 1983. When The Northern Star checked Hammoud's UM records, it was found that she had not earned a doctoral degree and her master's degree was earned in 1971, not 1978. . . ."

—*from* The Northern Star, *April 13, 1989*

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protests inside university buildings. But IDA and the gym were more important as symbols of everything the students felt was wrong, than as issues in their own right.

Like many things, the Columbia strike was both so silly and so serious at the same time. While on the one hand there was the radical students' admitted lack of a real agenda, still, the blacks in Hamilton Hall had weapons. During the strike one couple got married amid their fellow strikers at Fayerweather Hall. "Do you, Andrea, take Richard for your man?" the minister asked the bride. "Do you, Richard, take Andrea for your girl? I now pronounce you children of the new age." One evening music professor Otto Luening, 87 years old and bridging a gap of several generations, showed his support by playing piano for the students in Low's Rotunda. In a slower moment, James Kunen (author of the famous account of the strike, *The Strawberry Statement*) asked, "Was the Paris Commune this boring?" Then, on April 30, the police violently broke it up. Of the 712 arrested, 132 were injured. Some were beaten about the head and one girl was pushed by the cops (says Kunen) through a glass door. And yet in his book his somewhat dippy tone doesn't change even after the violence. This quote is typical:

"Wed. July 19: I went to Washington, DC, for the rich people's march in support of the Poor People's Campaign. You are supposed to come away from these affairs with a renewed commitment and sense of purpose. I came away with two girls' addresses and a slight tan."

Andy the Icon

He is the great 60's symbol, epitomizing all its releases, all its ironies, and all its sickness: if he didn't sleep around and take drugs, he watched his friends do so, and in the era of flower children and communes he was unstintingly commercial. It was always *l'art pour l'argent*. He was the artist as art, the silent satirist, and when his irony encompassed his paintings, then that was just the biggest joke of all. "That Pop Art—I thought that was just s---" laughs Warhol "superstar" Viva, who did not hesitate to say as much. "Oh, I told him it was s---, and he'd say 'Well, gee, I can't help it.' We spent a lot of time deciding which paintings were lousy enough to throw out."

People forget that the 60's were also about money and commercialism; that this was the golden age of advertising; that men would give their dates $200 for a cab home—not in return for services, but just as pin money; that Huntington Hartford would walk into the bar Peartrees uptown and invite the crowd to come with him to the Bahamas: his plane was leaving at 10 o'clock. In New York there was even an element of commercialism applied to the hippies themselves. You could rent hippies for, say, your garden party, and you'd get real hippies, too, recruited off the streets downtown. Generally speaking, the worse they acted, the happier their renters were.

But Andy Warhol did not forget: all that free love and drugs was just hype, after all, and hype exists only to promote business. "Being good in business," he said somewhere, "is the most fascinating kind of art." He died with an estate worth several millions.

Emile de Antonio, a Marxist and documentary filmmaker whose *Year of the Pig* (on the Vietnam War) came out in '68, says that "Andy was the ultimate voyeur, in that he never peeked. His presence was enough so that you did what the voyeur wanted." In other words, he was the grand manipulator. "He had too much control over my life," was Valeria Solanis' excuse when she shot him nearly to death in June 1968. In a way, it seems almost inevitable that something like that should happen to him; he was always courting death, or at least filming it. And in a way he is even in being shot a symbol for that era: he went all the way out on some kind of moral limb, sawed it off, and lived to tell about it.

"He was not cut out to be his brother's keeper," art critic John Richardson said at his funeral, quoting with equanimity this famous retort of Cain's. "The distance he established between the world and himself was above all a matter of innocence and of art."

But if Warhol was the ultimate cynic, others are not. Cheryl Terry has mostly good memories. The word she keeps using is "fun": "it was unbelievably fun." The others I spoke to agree. Only looking back now from their 40's and 50's and 60's, they remember the downside as well. Artist Charles Finch, who was a teenager at the time, came back from a concert in the late 60's to find a friend of his who'd been tripping had jumped out a window and killed himself.

Eberstadt ran into a friend of his en route to a birthday party who was carrying along a paper bag lunch she'd bought at Bloomingdale's. When Eberstadt pointed out that the hosts would probably be happy to feed her, she declared that she wouldn't eat one single thing they were serving, "least of all cake." He continues: "There was one party I heard of where somebody put acid in some kind of a punch and didn't tell people, and some of them went right from the party to the hospital. It was dreadful."

There is a creepy irony to reading in Timothy Leary's *High Priest* how he would scold his daughter that "she'd ruin her eyes" reading in the dimness even as Allen Ginsberg lay upstairs, high on magic mushrooms, choking down his vomit, and experiencing "Milton's Lucifer" flashing through his mind.

Viva, now the mother of two daughters and journalist in New York, who still says all the sleeping around and drugs she did in the 60's were fun, adds that this particular period in her life involved "a lot of sexual activity without any real feeling behind it, or real passion. It was all experimentation. I find so much more value in my life right now that I could never go back to it."

But perhaps the most perceptive comment was made by Rod Gander, now the president of Marlboro College in Vermont. In the late 60's he was chief of correspondents for *Newsweek*, and, among other things, he covered the 1968 Chicago Democratic Convention and ensuing trouble. "Just the other day a friend of mine was talking to Vernon Jordan," he begins; Jordan had been the right-hand man to Whitney Young. "And Vernon's reflection was that during the 60's we did a hell of a lot of tearing down and ripping away the facade, and left a lot of debris, but that none of us have been able to figure how to clear the debris. And the more I think about it the more I think it's very apt. Once it was stripped away, we didn't know how to deal with what was left." ◇

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Apprenticed to the Bird Master
(American; 18th Century)

by Brendan Galvin

Trout for his fish hawk's clamp,
torn ducks, shrews, what a congeries
of the bloated and debrained
I gathered. Two autumns

I scaled trees Old Longabelly
couldn't negotiate, bringing
empty nests to earth, and more
than once a papery hornet's globe.

I was his retriever as well as cook
and pack beast, and drubbed enough
for all three when he was sliding in
his boozing can. Had you crossed us
on some trace, you'd have had to skin
your best eye to discover me

under skins and dangling corpses,
strapped about with sacks, hung with
the jug he replenished at every
settled turn in the road. Thus piled,
you might take me for a wandering
apothecary whilst he trotted ahead,
wheezing under his flintlock,
a clay pipe stuck in the bore.

Grog blossoms throve across his face
and he slowed day by day,
drawing more and more to parlors,
cozening benefactors with his
beaded moccasins and a wolf's tooth
at one ear, playing senex to young ladies,

betwixt times working from models
too long stale. Therefore
his later plates are without innocence
or belief: creation's exuberance
isn't in them, though hearsay
and foozling are, as where his blue
grosbeak graces a meadowlark's nest.

Hours in the dark he stared
whispering to his cup and to the fire.
Perhaps there he saw "the underground
castle of the swallows" he portrayed
in number 129. And though he led me
to riverbanks and trained my eye

for the cleanest streaks of ochre
and red earths, and forever wandered
off trail for a scrape of black lead
or pine-green clay he seemed
to know was there—which I'd crush
in the mortar cup and bind as demanded

with beeswax or walnut oil
when we had them, or with milk
bought on the way, or flour
and water, or yolks from any nest
I could climb to and rifle—,
though he schooled me in toning
and subtilizing and blending,

and in which roots, shredded
and boiled together, yielded
dark yellows, reds, and blacks—
one morning, aged fourteen, I woke
near Charles Town believing
I could endure my hard paymaster
no longer, without arriving
at fiddlestick's end.

For he wanted my background
oakwoods vague as clouds, my rocks
mere pedestals for his birds,
nothing to draw the eye from his
foreground glories. Unlicked cub
that I was, I could not hold back:

when mud to support his avocet
was called for, I did him an ooze
of modulated umbers and greens
he'd feel between his toes,
payment for all the sloughs I walked
to retrieve whatever life
his aim knocked from the air.

The shadows of my pebbles
lean away from the sun, and every bead's
there in my pod of wild Spanish coffee,
but those plates, inscribed to his patrons,
want the name of the boy
who waded cottonmouth waters
for the swamp snowball
that overwhelms Longabelly's greenlet.

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Good as Goldwyn

by George Garrett

"They designed an entire solar system in just six seconds. It took God six days, if you believe the Old Testament."
—Gene Roddenberry in an interview

Goldwyn: A Biography
by A. Scott Berg
New York: Alfred A. Knopf;
580 pp., $24.95

"It's not his life, it's a fairy story," wrote John Dos Passos of the life of Sam Goldwyn in a documentary section of *Mid-Century* (1961). Even though Dos Passos had to depend almost entirely on canned "facts" and public relations handouts, together with an extended personal interview, his little seven-page section, "The Promised Land (old style)," manages to say more, more truly and deeply, than A. Scott Berg's massive (580 pages), much-promoted, widely advertised, and extensively reviewed *Goldwyn: A Biography*. But the comparison and contrast is not quite fair. Dos Passos was a major writer. You don't read Berg for the fine writing or for the refinement and depth of his perceptions; you read him for information he has gained and gleaned from years of honorable hard labor and for his undeniable knack at organizing and refining a heap of factual raw materials into some cumulative and chronological patterns. Dos Passos was dead right, though. The life of Schmuel Gelbfisz of Warsaw, Poland, who became Samuel Goldfish in Birmingham, England, and finally, in America, the one and only Samuel Goldwyn, can justly be taken as an old-fashioned fairy tale of magical transformation—sow's ear into silk purse. It would make a pretty good movie, all in all, following the inexorable rise, from anonymous glovemaker to famous filmmaker, of a passionate, rootless, ruthless (and lucky) survivor who escapes from the grinding, almost hopeless material poverty of one country and century to find great wealth and eminence and some tokens of honor in another nation and century, ending his days at last physically "reduced to a vegetable," as his son says. And although his actual bones rest and rot appropriately in opulent and vulgar Forest Lawn, there is a sad and symbolic sense in which he may be said to rest forever in an intellectual and spiritual potter's field, that haunting place the dictionary describes as "a burial place for strangers and the friendless poor." It could, thus, be a tragic tale, certainly a pathetic one, if Goldwyn had not also been so uniformly and famously funny—this biography has the greatest collection of "Goldwynisms" yet assembled—and, behind all the fun and games, if he were not so consistently and irresistibly wicked in his dealings with all other creatures great and small, friend and foe alike. And, too, if his line of work, almost wholly exploitative and parasitical, show business pure and simple, were not, after all is said and done, asserted and debated, essentially inconsequential.

Something else inhibits the shadows and undertones of pathos—our nostalgia for the rough and ready hard grabbers of an earlier, simpler time. It is so much easier to like Blackbeard the Pirate than Ivan Boesky, Captain Kidd than Donald Trump, Lucretia Borgia than Leona Helmsley. Slick contemporary corporate people, CEO's and even the lesser lords and ladies, are boring (and dangerous to health and welfare) with a capital B. Sam Goldwyn lived and died as an Independent Producer. In the years be-

George Garrett is the author of the forthcoming Entered From the Sun, *about the life and death of Christopher Marlowe.*

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tween *The Squaw Man* (1914) and *Porgy and Bess* (1959) he produced a long list of picture shows, some of them pretty good, and one of them, *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946), earning him a belated Academy Award. Goldwyn knew and worked (and fought) with practically everybody in the history of Hollywood. (The photographs of them are well chosen, great and good fun.) And allowing for the enforced limits of seeing the world from a single, unheroic point of view, *Goldwyn* is a solid history of the movie business and, as well, of this nation that supported that business. There is an odd and interesting inversion there; for the movie industry thrived most when the nation's economy was in worst shape and vice versa. It could be said, though it hasn't been, that our national best interests and theirs are often contradictory. It is probably a good idea to compare and contrast Berg's *Goldwyn* with more general recent histories, most pertinently Neal Gobler's excellent *An Empire of Their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood*. But *Goldwyn* is solid and scholarly and interesting and easy to read, worthy of all the excellent reviews it has been receiving; although the very best of these (so far), John Gregory Dunne's "Goldwynism," in *The New York Review of Books* (May 18, 1989), has serious reservations and revisions to make.

I, too, would like to make a couple of minor corrective points.

One of these has to do with the claim made by Berg, in his book and in a number of recent published interviews, that he has enjoyed nearly perfect freedom in the making of this book. Anybody who has ever done any biographical work knows that unless the subject has been dead for several centuries, only an unauthorized biography, built upon materials in the public domain and depending in no way on the resources and good will of the subject's estate, can ever be "free." Berg tells us that Samuel Goldwyn Jr. sought him out to write the biography and that he, Berg, refused the task unless he had complete access to all materials and freedom to call it any way he saw it. Well, maybe. Just *maybe*. But I kind of doubt it. In the absence of a published copy of the actual contract, we are asked to take this unlikely tale on faith. What Berg really tells us in the book is: "He [Goldwyn Jr.] assured me that he would make himself available to discuss his mother and father and that he would exercise no control over the contents of the biography." It is virtually unheard of for anybody to relinquish all rights of review and revision; and chip off the old block Sam Jr. certainly seems an unlikely candidate to render himself highly vulnerable on the basis of some kind of vague authorial honor system. The old man probably never said, "A verbal contract isn't worth the paper it's written on." But you can believe he could have.

Berg offers many of the warty details of Goldwyn's life and career; so that, in a relative sense, *Goldwyn* is far removed from your typical puff job. But Berg remains uniformly kind to the memory of old Sam; and he is especially generous to (and unquestioning of) the life and times of Samuel Goldwyn Jr. Not that Berg has suppressed anything, or, anyway, anything we can know about; but the context he creates tends to understate the insatiable greed, the insufferable arrogance, the brutal indifference to the needs of others, including his own family, the chicanery and manipulation, the lying, stealing, and cheating that seem to have characterized old Goldwyn's ways and means from the beginning to the end.

It is probable that Goldwyn was a somewhat better human being than most of the other old-timey Hollywood tycoons, but whether that should be emblazoned in heraldry remains to be seen. It can be and probably should be mentioned that these colorful, freebooting, claw-fingered barbarians who truly created the myth machine, the dream factory of Hollywood, these alien pirates of whom Goldwyn may have been the best man, are not entirely blameless in some serious matters of our social and cultural history. Sure, they fed us a diet of dreams and we paid them very well for the pleasure of it. But are not some of those dreams, whether formed out of ignorance or shrewd design, almost antithetical to the larger (truer?) American dream? Are not some of those dreams false and corrupt? Once upon a time there certainly was much more to the American dream than the ruthless, obsessive, and rapacious pursuit of success, status, riches, comfort, and celebrity. There were also, from our beginnings, the ideals, especially for the privileged and the lucky, of duty, honor, service, and sacrifice. And for all of us there was the dream of liberty, the hope for brotherhood and equality.

By their highly profitable art and by the example of their dedicated if dissolute lives, the Hollywood dream salesmen helped to change all that for the worse. And our generation has lived to witness a deadly serious confusion of show business and self-government, a world in which the distortions of publicity and contrived perception replace facts as, in Frost's phrase, "the sweetest dream that labor knows." Though, sooner or later, all skulls are reduced to smiling, Sam Goldwyn's must be grinning broadly.

One of the most contemptible times of the Hollywood old-timers was "the McCarthy era." It was show business, from the beginning, and it was chiefly Hollywood that fueled all the sad nonsense and created and kept the blacklists. There are strong hints in the subtext of Berg's book that blacklisting was an old Hollywood tradition and a useful weapon in Goldwyn's armory. Nowadays it is Hollywood that tells us, repeatedly, that the whole country was tainted and sick with "McCarthyism." Maybe so; maybe not. But there can be not the least doubt that Hollywood was infected. According to Berg's book, Sam Goldwyn, true to form and his guardian inner spirit, took and held the moral middle ground in this matter as in everything else that matters.

Well then. A lively, at times a fascinating story, a modern fairy tale where dungy straw is spun into threads of gold. Yet in a real sense Hollywood movies fail, the way Goldwyn, even at his finest, failed, by finally avoiding or anyway slighting the hard truths, by ignoring the really hard questions and hard sayings that are the very blood and guts of this nation, its people, and their aspirations. Blood and guts he could do without, though he once apologized to Thurber for making a story of his too "blood and thirsty."

"It turned out just as he had dreamed," Dos Passos writes. "He'd reached America and he'd made his fortune. It was what they called freedom." ◇

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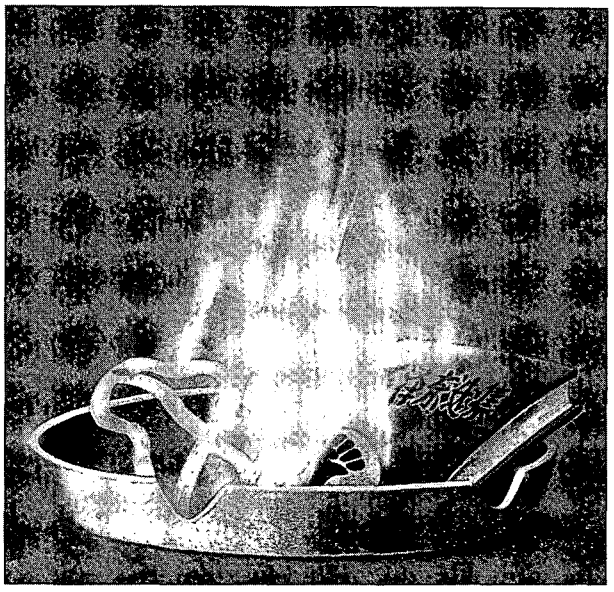
"Enemies of Society"

by Arthur M. Eckstein

"The essential matter of history is not what happened but what people thought or said about it."

—Frederic Maitland



Destructive Generation: Second Thoughts About the Sixties
by Peter Collier and David Horowitz
New York: Summit Books;
338 pp., $19.95

◆

In the late summer of 1985, the San Francisco Bay area celebrated the 40th anniversary of VJ Day and the end of World War II. Part of the celebration consisted of a cavalcade of American Navy vessels around the Bay; this commemorative cavalcade, however, was shadowed by a squadron of small pleasure boats defiantly flying the Japanese flag. These boats were the forces of "The Berkeley Peace Fleet"—*protesting* the celebration. A story hard to believe, perhaps, but true (I witnessed it myself): to the American Hard Left, it seems that any enemy of American society will do—even Japanese fascism.

"Any enemy of American society will do": this is the brutal point hammered home again and again in the collection of essays that make up the disturbing new book by Peter Collier and David Horowitz, *Destructive Generation: Second Thoughts About the Sixties*. Long-time editors of the radical magazine *Ramparts*, Collier and Horowitz are also (for instance) the men who introduced Jane Fonda to American far-left politics. Again, when Jean Genet held his momentous "summit meeting" with the Black Panthers (at the home, of course, of a Stanford professor), it was natural that Collier and Horowitz would be there. In other words, when they write about the Movement, they write from the inside.

Basically, they make two grim points. First, within the context of American society at home, they argue that the New Left has historically defended and then identified with violent criminality. Criminals were originally thought of as social victims rather than social predators, then seen as valiant Miltonian rebels, and finally viewed as the militant, military vanguard of the Revolution. Parallel with this sequence of intellectual degradation, the New Left itself—which of course was overwhelmingly white and bourgeois in origin—went from peaceful protest to violent protest to outright terrorism.

Second, within the context of America's relationships with the world, the New Left has historically slid from sympathy for the alleged "victims" of the United States into outright identification with the proclaimed international enemies of the United States. The paradigm here was provided by the emotional tie between American Marxism and the Soviet Union during the 1930's; but that relationship was soon being spookily recapitulated in the relationship between the New Left and Vietnam, Cuba, and Maoist China in the 60's, and Nicaragua in the 70's and 80's. What has been especially disheartening since about 1975 has been the reemergence of the old-line Communist Party of the USA as an intellectual and political force within the movement. Hence the many recent leftist historical studies in which the Stalinist party hacks of the 30's are portrayed as heroic American dissidents; hence the sinister role played by the World Peace Council (an old

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Soviet-front group) in the nuclear freeze; hence the fact that when Collier and Horowitz last appeared at the University of Colorado, the picketing against them was led by the ancient Sender Garlin, current guru of the Colorado left—and the man who recruited Whittaker Chambers for the party back in 1925.

Indeed, in the end Collier and Horowitz argue that if there ever was such a thing as a *New* Left—the openly anti-Stalinist left of "participatory democracy" and "Mississippi Freedom Summer" (1964)—its span of life was extremely brief, and it has long since disappeared. What has replaced it—and had already replaced it by, say, 1966—was simply the old Hard Left, totalitarian in sentiment, and dedicated to the destruction of American power and influence.

The first essay in the book (and the best) is the heartrending story of the radical lawyer Fay Stender. Brilliant, forceful, a concert-level pianist as well as formidable legal mind, Stender was moved by sincere compassion for the underprivileged, and became more and more drawn to the issue of "convicts' rights"—a movement that her energy helped make national in scale. Eventually she became the head of a radical law firm closely associated with the Black Panther Party. She ended up defending the thug George Jackson, a Panther "Field Marshal" accused of murdering a prison guard. Jackson was portrayed in his "autobiography" (which Stender cleverly edited) as a saintly revolutionary, the type of person who would create the new America for which Stender herself longed; the book, *Soledad Brother*, became a best-seller, and George Jackson became famous.

But by the summer of 1971 Stender had also become convinced that in reality Jackson was a very violent and uncontrolled personality—too dangerous to deal with. She withdrew from his legal case when it became clear to her that Jackson was going to attempt an armed break-out from San Quentin (six people died in the resulting bloodbath); eventually she withdrew, disillusioned, from convict law altogether. She became instead an innovative advocate of women's rights (and has a fair claim to be seen as the originator of the concept of "palimony"). But in 1979 Stender's past connection to "The Revolution" came back to destroy her: a brutal hanger-on of George Jackson's invaded her Berkeley home and shot her five times at point-blank range, leaving her paralyzed from the neck down and in constant pain. Her last appearance in a court of law was to testify for the prosecution. And then the horrific pain she was under (mostly physical, but also psychological—"I structured my entire existence around trying to do something about racism; and now this") led her to commit suicide.

If the story of Fay Stender has all the elements of tragedy, the essay on the decline and fall of SDS and the Weather Underground has all the elements of black comedy. Here you have an organization that in the autumn of 1968 had close to 100,000 members and stood on the threshold of real national power; within two years that organization had been reduced to just 600 people—but at least they were all "pure revolutionaries"! The cause of this fiasco lay in the psychotic revolutionary fantasies of the SDS leadership, who persisted in thinking they were in the position of the Bolsheviks in 1917. What a crew they were: Bernadine Dohrn (the Red Queen of the Revolution, famous for her technique of "horizontal recruitment"); John Jacobs, the ever-ingenious, hyperenergetic propagandist, living on drugs; the tiny, sinister bomber Terry Robbins; the confused and increasingly wary Mark Rudd. Nor should one forget Tom Hayden, "the American Lenin": by 1970 reduced to military leader of "The Berkeley Red Family," convinced that he could ignite the Revolution by getting the Black Panthers to shoot down an Alameda County sheriff's helicopter ("Just like you, Tom, to get someone else to pull the trigger"). Some sort of nadir here was reached in Dohrn's famous speech to the SDS leadership in which she proclaimed the crazed mass murderer Charles Manson as a revolutionary hero.

But amid all these savage hallucinations, a new mood was established in which some real treason could be committed: meetings with the North Vietnamese, in Havana and Prague, to coordinate anti-American propaganda and "military" actions around the world. (Collier and Horowitz show how they themselves partook in the new, overtly anti-American culture, printing in *Ramparts* secret information that they knew would compromise the US defense posture in regard to the Soviet Union; all that happened to them was that they became celebrities.) And some people were really killed, too. The most spectacular case: three soldiers of "The Weather Army," who blew themselves to bits while constructing an antipersonnel bomb—a bomb, by the way, whose intended victims were ordinary enlisted men and their dates at a dance in Ft. Dix, New Jersey. The left is furious with Collier and Horowitz for revealing (for the first time) the hideous nature of the explosive device here, and its working-class targets: it made the Weather bombers look so bad. The latter's "martyrdom," however, is still ceremonially commemorated every year.

Another outstanding article is Horowitz's "Letter to a Political Friend." This is a meditation on the philosophy of socialism, called forth by the death of Horowitz's father (an old-line Communist), and the failure of one of Horowitz's childhood friends to attend the funeral on the grounds that he now viewed Horowitz as someone who had "betrayed the Revolution." Horowitz's father had devoted his life to the cause of "socialism," and in the early 50's had allowed himself to be cruelly used by the party in an "America is Anti-Semitic" campaign—an experience from which he never fully recovered; Horowitz now sees in the behavior of his childhood friend the same lack of human feeling, the same lack of ordinary "bourgeois" decency, that had characterized the Old Left, and from which the "New" Left had originally sought to distance itself. That effort was ultimately in vain, however, because the Hard Left is always just the Hard Left: always subject to the tyranny of the Idea, as opposed to the ordinary truths of everyday human life.

What else but emotional shallowness, for instance, can explain the break-up of decades-long marriages as a result of the 1956 Khrushchev speech against Stalin? What else but emotional shallowness, a horrid loneliness, can explain lives that find their centers not in true personal relationships but in violent sectarian politics of

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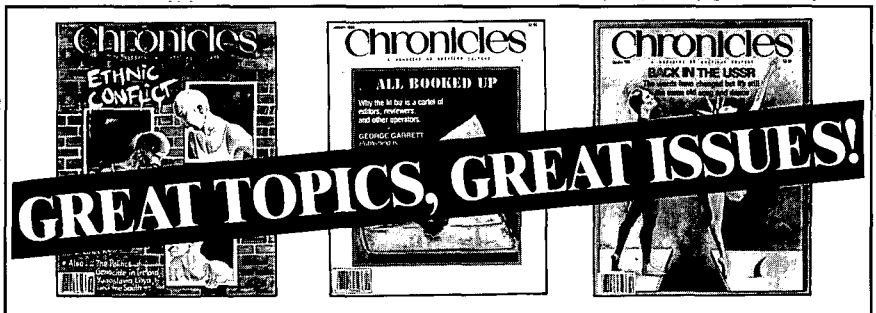
any sort? "Not compassion but resentment . . . not the longing for justice but the desire for revenge; not a quest for peace but a call to arms . . . not altruism and love but nihilism and hate. This is the poisoned well of the radical heart; it is war that feeds the true radical passions."

Powerful stuff; perhaps a little too powerful. Sometimes, when Collier and Horowitz make generalized statements like this, it is not quite clear who their exact targets are. I have tended to use the term "Hard Left" throughout this essay, because that's what I *think* Collier and Horowitz mean. But this is my formulation, not theirs; they are all too often satisfied with the simple term "the left." Yet "the left" in reality is a pretty big place, and Collier and Horowitz never address the possibility of whether there could ever be such a thing as a "responsible" American left — or rather, to put it bluntly, a patriotic American left. Perhaps the answer here is "No," because the moderate left has a very strong tendency to be pulled into anti-American postures by the hard-liners. But I don't think that people like Irving Howe and Michael Harrington, however much one might disagree with their ideas, deserve to be lumped with Bernadine Dohrn or Kathy Boudin as potential totalitarians. In other words, the actual targets of Collier and Horowitz turn out upon inspection to be a much narrower group than the general term "the left" might imply.

Similarly, despite its dramatic title — and despite the generalizations in the last, polemical essay — *Destructive Generation* does not have as its true subject the 60's generation as a whole. The book is really about a very small group of people: around a dozen, all told. And not every one of them is ultimately destructive: not Fay Stender, not the Vietnam veteran (now a policeman) who is the hero of another major piece, not Collier and Horowitz themselves. I think it is true that the 60's generation should be viewed with great suspicion. But this could and should have been demonstrated with more examples: for instance, the nasty things the old 60's radicals are doing to our universities, where so many of them have managed to take refuge. (The fact that Bill Ayers, a central figure in Weatherman terrorism, current husband of Bernadine Dohrn, and a man who is still living in confident expectation of the Revolution, is also today a professor of education: well, this boggles the mind, but it is not something one can find out from Collier and Horowitz.) Similarly, many old unreconstructed radicals can be found now on the staffs of prominent Democratic congressmen: what a wonderful essay Collier and Horowitz could have written on these people. But as the book stands, it is subject to the accusation that the authors have picked on — and exaggerated the importance of — a few particularly vulnerable targets.

But Collier and Horowitz are correct to point out that in the 60's generation there are a fair number of people who have had second thoughts about their old radicalism. These people know that the radical future is an illusion and that the American present is worth defending. So it is very likely, as Collier and Horowitz indicate, that the great political battles of the next decade will be fought out between those who have had second thoughts about their experiences in the 60's, and those who have not. And for those of us who have to gird ourselves for these upcoming battles, *Destructive Generation* is a very important book to read.

A final, personal note. This is a book very much about Berkeley, which is one reason it moved me deeply — sometimes to anger, more often to sadness. For I have to confess that every summer I go back there, to that spooky, living museum of 60's attitudes — and have a wonderful time. And it's not just the amazing, clear light of the place, nor the use of the great libraries of the university. Berkeley is also the place where I peer back — and with some sentimentality — at my sort-of-radical youth, to a time when everything seemed humanly possible. It's those "US Out of North America" bumper-stickers, though, that occasionally make me cough.



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American Fiction – May 1989 – A celebration of American fiction writing that includes a lengthy excerpt from George Garrett's new novel *Entered From the Sun*, about the life and death of Elizabethan playwright Christopher Marlowe. Plus novelist Walker Percy on the writer as diagnostician, and a short story by Fred Chappell.

Revolution: The Legacy of 1789 in France, England and America – June 1989 – Revolutions around the world: Geoffrey Wagner on Grenada and the Caribbean, Leo Raditsa on South Africa, Don Feder on Israel's religious revolution, and Michael Warder on *glasnost* and the USSR. Plus George Watson on the English and French Revolutions, an update from Paul Hollander on political pilgrims, and Jack Neusner reviews *Profscam*.

The Burden of Liberalism – July 1989 – 1988 Ingersoll Prize winner, sociologist Edward Shils, on the varieties of liberalism; historian George Watson on postwar Buchenwald: for the Soviets it was also a death camp. Timothy Ashby reviews Hernando de Soto's plea for unfettered capitalism in South America, *The Other Path*.

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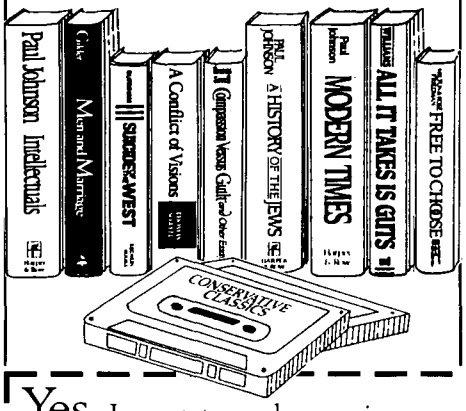

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Novel Ideas

by Thomas McGonigle

Every Man a King
by Bill Kauffman
New York: Soho Press;
229 pp., $17.95

The Twenty-seventh City
by Jonathan Franzen
New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux;
517 pp., $19.95

Emperor of the Air
by Ethan Canin
New York: Harper & Row;
179 pp., $7.95 (paper)

Geek Love
by Katherine Dunn
New York: Alfred A. Knopf;
348 pp., $18.95

◆

"Nigger" is the word upon which Bill Kauffman balances and dances his first novel, *Every Man a King*. It is, to say the very least, a difficult word. It is a word denied to white lips in polite society, and is now heard only coming with any frequency from trash-mouthed blacks.

The saying of the forbidden word on a television show by Kauffman's central character requires his banishment from Washington and precludes any political future. How easy it is to become a nonperson in the United States.

Every Man a King is satire. In the first third or so of the book the victims belong to the new Conservative Coalition. The hero (like Kauffman) is a populist agrarian conservative with little patience for New York parochials. I do not know what someone who does not share this viewpoint would make of it:

> In vain might the curious visitor [to the think tank where the central character works] search for evidence of the Mugwump conservatism of Henry Adams, the gallant localist conservatism of Jefferson Davis, the rumbustious anarchist conservatism of John Dos Passos, or any of a thousand brilliant and singular mutations. The American Foundation, its patrons and clients (including the scurrying ants of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue) in lockstep, held to a peculiar and astringent doctrine admixing unstinting loyalty to big business with a perfervid enthusiasm for all things military. The resulting alloy they called "conservatism," and on its behalf they sacrificed forests of paper and covens of smiling senior fellows, all to quench the unquenchable appetite of the Goddess Media.

Having uttered the unmentionable, John Huey returns to his hometown, Batavia, in Upstate New York. He takes up with a woman from the lower orders and we are given to understand that such people are noble in some way. He calls up the memory of his grandfather, who was a member of Huey Long's Share the Wealth Club (and thus the title of the book). My main problem with the book is I think that populist utopianism can be as offensive as leftist or rightist utopianism, and there are limits to revisionist ideas, in spite of the certain pleasure I had watching Kauffman get a dig in once in a while against Roosevelt and gang.

A conservative reader might nod his or her head, glad that the book is around but knowing in the heart of hearts it will not matter much. And while I'll nod my head and murmur approval at the slings and arrows Kauffman slugs at the big city and the blurb manufacturers, go ahead and quote me as writing: *Every Man a King* is a funny, delicious political dash against the well-known suspects.

The Twenty-seventh City, on the other hand, is more a long proposal for a film than an actual novel. Its editor has asserted in an interview that he actually did read it, but he never gets around to saying exactly what made it, in his words, "an impressive and challenging book." I am sure they can wheel in the dying horse: a literary novel that makes use of the thriller package, this time set in St. Louis and involving the appointment of a woman from India as the police chief. Of course there is sex and some sort of conspiracy. The engine of plot chugs on for pages. If you have read Ludlum, Michener, or any of the other worthies from the best-seller list then you have already read *The Twenty-seventh City*. The function of this novel is to pass time. Never have so many been in need of this sort of drug, to pass a mental kidney stone. Why don't they just watch television?

The *Emperor of the Air* has been garlanded with praise. We all know that the author is studying in Boston to be a doctor. One hopes that he will be a better doctor than his stories predict. I would not seek him out to treat any ailment. He would commit surgery to cure a mosquito bite.

If there is something still called magazine verse, the *Emperor of the Air* would pass as the equivalent of magazine fiction. Pretension and pretentious are the brackets. You pay your money and you better get inspired. The characters in these stories are always sensitive; their problems are always significant. They always *mean* something, but their depth goes no deeper than a greeting card. The characters are so illusive, so uplifting that to this reader they are like eating too much baklava: headache, teeth coated, and why did I do this again, when I do know better. Some evidence:

> When I thought of this and the woman I was sad. It seemed you could never really know another person. I felt alone in the world, in the way that makes me aware of sound and temperature, as if I had just left a movie theatre and stepped into an alley where a light rain was falling, and the wind was cool, and, from somewhere, other people's voices could be heard.
>
> "Don't just watch," he said. "See." I looked. The ice plant was watery-looking and fat and at the edges of my vision I

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could see the tips of my father's
shoes. I was sixteen years old
and waiting for the next thing
he would tell me.

Then he thought: What can
you do? These are clouds above
us, and below us there is ice
and the earth. He said, "I give."

* * *

Despite all science, I think we
will never understand the
sadness of certain notes.

My hand finds her fingers and
grips them, bone and tendon,
fragile things.

Sentences like the above provoked the critics: "Startling . . . self-discovery with a voice of compassion . . . energy . . . extraordinarily gifted . . . unexpected flight . . . glowing . . . guilty of brilliance."

Is there a new hallucinogenic drug moving through the critical world?

I do not want to leave you in this slough of despond, so I will recommend *Geek Love* by Katherine Dunn. *The Village Voice* is annoyed because, they think, it is unfair to lesbians. It was reviewed in *The New York Times* by a thriller writer who was disappointed that it was not a thriller.

Be all that as it may, *Geek Love* is one of the most exciting and bizarre novels to be published in a long time. Its vision is extreme in the way of Swift and Céline. It has the bite and fury of Parts Three and Four of *Gulliver's Travels*, and the verbal energy of the later Céline novels, *Nord* and *Castle to Castle*. It sings with a sort of classical epigrammatic authority. The story, mostly narrated by an albino hunchbacked dwarf, is of life midst her family of traveling freaks, Binewski's Fabulon. Some of the freaks are natural, others are chemically induced. There are Siamese twin sisters who play the piano and do a bit of prostitution on the side. The central character, Artie, who has flippers instead of arms and legs, becomes the focus of a cult whose members offer up their arms, legs, eyes, and sexual organs in homage to him. Artie calls himself an industrial accident.

The cult is described in loving detail and quickly the reader understands that there are implications. Doctor Phyllis, who performs the surgery demanded by the cult members, argues that lobotomy is the ultimate short cut to: P.I.P.—Peace, Isolation, and Purity. Cut once. Cut deep.

Geek Love refuses to pander and refuses to make things easy for the reader, though it is extremely readable. I am glad that many readers will be put off by the subject matter. Truly moral books are for the very few. It is the most spirited and compelling defense of human life *in all of its forms* that I am aware of. Some quotes in partial substantiation of my claim:

It is, I suppose, the common
grief of children at having to
protect their parents from
reality. It is bitter for the young
to see what awful innocence
adults grow into, that terrible
vulnerability that must be
sheltered from the rodent mire
of childhood.

. . . like many other
sophisticated people, she is
unduly impressed by anything
connected with the mass
media . . .

"I was thirty-eight years old,"
muses Miss Oly, "before I ever
felt the burn of whiskey on my
lips. But I knew it right away for
what it was."
"The virgin's arms," nods
Jimmy. "God's breath."

Thomas McGonigle is a novelist living in New York City.

Waters of Life

by Odie B. Faulk

The Arkansas: An American River
by William Mills
Fayetteville and London:
The University of Arkansas Press;
250 pp., $30.00

◆

The Arkansas River is born from melting snow on Mt. Arkansas at 13,795 feet above sea level in the state of Colorado. Rushing down through cataracts and gorges, it gathers strength from a multitude of rivulets and creeks to burst free from the mountains laden with silt. Across the Great Plains of eastern Colorado and almost the length of Kansas it meanders through a land where the wind seems eternal, freezing in winter and parching in summer, a land subject to storms that in spring bring tornadoes, hail, and rain, where the "northers" of winter bring sleet and blinding snowstorms, and where in the summer the winds blow hot from the south and up into the mountains to melt the snows and bring yet more water rushing down to feed a thirsty land, livestock, and people.

Once into Oklahoma and Arkansas, the channel of this river becomes narrower and better defined, for the land is more resistant to erosion. Moving through the Cross Timbers, a region of blackjack and post oak intermingled with mesquite and smaller shrubbery, the Arkansas supports tall cottonwoods that give way to pine, giant live and white oaks, and finally to stately cyprus and pecan groves. From snow buttercups to delta rice fields, the Arkansas is home to myriad plants and animals, but none has changed the river like man.

The Arkansas has long since ceased to be a wild river. It, like the land along its banks, was regarded by the pioneer settlers as a resource meant by a generous Creator to help man, something to be put to productive use as rapidly as possible. So many irrigation ditches were run out from its banks in southeastern Colorado and western Kansas that from the air they appeared like bones running away from the spine of a fish stripped of its flesh.

Then, as the technology of drilling was improved by the petroleum industry, wells were dug into the water sands along the Arkansas to pump millions of gallons of water to nearby fields. In fact, so many ditches and wells were dug that in years of scant snow and rainfall the Arkansas dried up in Kansas.

And as technology progressed, giant dams were built in Oklahoma and Arkansas to impound the waters of the Arkansas and release them in steady flow to support barge traffic on the McClellan-Kerr Waterway, a project of the Army Corps of Engineers. Billions of federal dollars were spent on this project, which the Corps of Engineers assured us would be cost effective, returning more than dollar for dollar above cost in benefits. Unfortunately, the Corps of Engineers has never met a federal project that it did not like. Every proposal can be guaranteed to be cost

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effective—and then, once built, produce only excuses for the continual failure to generate the benefits estimated to flow from it.

This volume, *The Arkansas: An American River*, is a highly personal view of a waterway of vital importance along its 1,460 miles. It supports agriculture and wildlife; it gives aesthetic pleasure to those who view it at Royal Gorge and at other scenic places along its course; it sustains myriad forms of wildlife; it bears trade and commerce on it for hundreds of miles where it has been channelized and marked by the Corps of Engineers; and it is a source of recreational pleasure to boaters and fishermen.

William Mills notes all these things, all of which are illustrated by photographs of stunning composition, breathtaking color, and excellent reproduction on enamel paper in a book of generous dimensions (9 x 10½ inches). The photographs alone make the book worth the price.

And Mills writes in rhapsodic terms about this river, his descriptive words flowing more like poetry than prose and containing quotes from earlier travelers such as Zebulon Montgomery Pike, John Charles Fremont, and Thomas Nuttall. He consulted the works of archeologists and historians, and he met numerous local characters whose stories are interesting in the retelling.

I firmly believe that an author should be judged on how well he accomplishes the goals he sets for himself. Mills' stated goals were to travel the river from west to east and try to "extend our awareness of what a national treasure the Arkansas River is and, as a result, help us to care for it more deeply." He has done what he set out to do, and he has done it well.

Unfortunately he has done more, for this is a book filled with most of the clichés now common to the preservationist-conservationist mentality—the concept that we are headed for doom and damnation because of the technological and rapacious sins of man. In his article in the February issue of *Chronicles*, Mills commented about agriculture in the Arkansas River Valley: "Farming the grasslands will have to be rethought as an art, rather than as running a factory." So also he tells us in this volume.

Should the day of the preservationists and the environmentalists arrive when everything is done "naturally," I hope Mr. Mills is here to tell not only starving Americans but those around the world whom the farm-factories of the Midwest now feed why they should be grateful because the land and water are being "respected." In his article in *Chronicles*, he wrote, "Nowadays nature is something to push against, to move around, get out of the way, get on top of." For this we can be thankful each time we sit down to a good meal.

I have additional problems with Mills. In that portion of the book where his journey on the Arkansas takes him to Muskogee, Oklahoma, he notes that one of his reasons for stopping there is the art of Jerome Tiger." Tiger was a tragic young man who killed himself while in his 20's, leaving behind art of unquestioned value. But one need not go to Muskogee to see it. It is widely displayed in museums, and the University of Oklahoma Press did a magnificent book filled with Tiger's art. Moreover, there are other Indian artists of great skill living in proximity to the Arkansas who could have been praised rather than Tiger.

Mills takes the patronizing view that all Native Americans respected nature and lived in harmony with it, as when he describes an Osage dance. "Observing the dancers dressed in the old way being watched by other Osage dressed like any contemporary Oklahoman is an image of tension," he writes. Then he editorializes, "The river reflects the same tension between a time when it went its own way, the old way, and the present, with our current attempts to manage it, to dam it. The new god, 'technology,' is in full sway."

He makes it obvious to any reader that the old way is better, but in case any of us misses the point he adds, "Like many others who consider such matters, though, I am uncertain about the new god of 'technology' or, more precisely, Man as the new god, with technology his very powerful slave. With this slave we have poisoned the river and even dried it up in places." Still afraid his reader may not get it, Mills drives it home in a three-word non-sentence, "Rather poor gods."

The Indians were as human as the rest of us, defiling nature to the extent of their technology. When they ran buffalo over a cliff to get meat, they did not turn the herd and stop the slaughter when they had enough for the tribe's needs. And archeologists dig in their trash dumps. To say the Indians respected nature, because they did not dam the river or dump industrial waste in it, is like saying they also were pro-life because they did not have abortion clinics or that they were anti-nuclear because they did not use atomic generating plants to make electricity.

Mills has a masterful pen, and his photographs are works of art. Unfortunately, as he traveled down the Arkansas, he was too much like Samuel Taylor Coleridge's ancient mariner who,

> Like one that on a
> lonesome road
> Doth walk in fear and dread,
> And having once turned round,
> walks on,
> And turns no more his head;
> Because he knows a
> frightful fiend
> Doth close behind him tread.

In this case Mills' frightful fiend is modern civilization, which has produced a standard of living that enables society to support those who would be artist/poet/philosopher/photographer rather than hunter/gatherer.

Odie B. Faulk is an emeritus professor at Northeastern State University in Oklahoma.

The Streetwalker's Story

by Bryce Christensen

Women and Prostitution: A Social History
by Vern Bullough and Bonnie Bullough
Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 374 pp., $17.95

◆

Prostitution may not deserve its reputation as the world's oldest profession, but it has been around for millennia, appearing in virtually every society. In this revised edition of a book originally published in 1978 (under a slightly different title), Vern Bullough and Bon-

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nie Bullough document the ubiquity and diversity of prostitution, tracing the practice from ancient Mesopotamia to contemporary America. In some ancient cultures — in both Greece and Babylon, for instance — certain types of prostitution were not only accepted, but were practiced within temple walls. Yet most recorded societies, including the Egyptian, Roman, Hebrew, and Oriental, distrusted the secular prostitute and treated her as an outcast, a woman "lower than the slave." In most tribal societies a woman who prostituted herself deeply offended male relatives, who could punish her however they saw fit. Even in Islam, an exceptionally permissive religion on sexual matters, the prostitute is judged "a disgrace to her family."

In preindustrial societies, prostitution prevailed primarily in the cities, showing up far less frequently in rural areas. Economic forces partly account for this pattern. While the spinster aunt of a village family could often earn her keep by helping with the cooking, child care, and farm chores, an unmarried woman usually faced bleak prospects in the money economy of the city. It is no accident that *meretrix*, the Latin term for a prostitute, means "she who earns."

Pecuniary pressures pushing women toward prostitution grew even stronger after the Industrial Revolution. On the other hand, moral sanctions against prostitution could not survive more than a generation after religious faith faded among the West's cultural elite. In a global summary, the Bulloughs conclude: "the key factor in the past in deciding the role that the prostitutes and prostitution would play in society was religious teaching." While the eminent Victorians debated the available cultural substitutes for religion, prostitution — including a shocking incidence of child prostitution — flourished.

It is characteristic of their feminist bias that the Bulloughs lament the emergence of "a double standard" of sexual conduct in every major culture, attributing this sex-biased norm to social failures, not to human nature. In the sexual utopia of their fantasy, the double standard will completely disappear, allowing "the decriminalization of sexual activity between consenting adults whether or not money changes hands." Contemporary America has not reached that Edenic state just yet, but the Bulloughs rejoice that since the sexual revolution, prostitution has declined in the United States. Because men no longer must pay for casual sex, demand for prostitutes has slackened. Credit for this remarkable development goes to the feminists who "created a climate of openness about female sexuality."

Feminists likewise receive plaudits in these pages for helping the employed mother manage childbearing and child care so as to "offer the least interference to her career." In the crazy world of post-feminism, extramarital sex may be had for the asking, while female care for children must be paid for. Yet nothing can dim the authors' enthusiasm for the feminist revolution, not even research showing that "the primary predisposing factor to prostitution [is] a history of severe maternal deprivation." I do not think it is too much to say that while modern mothers pursue their glamorous careers, they put their daughters at risk.

Bryce Christensen is editor of The Family in America.

The Structure of Meaning

by William Mills

Political Order: Philosophical Anthropology, Modernity, and the Challenge of Ideology
by David J. Levy
Louisiana State University Press: Baton Rouge; $22.50

◆

Levy's latest and very ambitious new book is an inquiry into the fundamental characteristics of political order from two perspectives: philosophical anthropology and the political philosophy of Eric Voegelin. The outcome is a vigorous defense of our institutions and traditions. The anthropological perspective has its roots in Max Scheler's work in the 1920's and 1930's. In *Man's Place in Nature*, which came out the year of his death, 1928, Scheler describes a topology of living forms, ascending in complexity, that often seems to echo Aristotle. He asserts that the "limits of psychic life coincide with the boundaries of organic life itself." Animal life is more differentiated than plant life, and human life is the most differentiated of all. Whereas animal intelligence is exclusively practical, responding in a stable way to his environment, man's is such that it opens up the world. Scheler attributes this to man being a spiritual being, meaning one who is able to say no to his immediate environment. This accounts for our sometime asceticism and for our capacity for altering the immediate environment.

Obviously such a description of "human nature" would be hotly debated, and even Scheler's admirers note an unreconciled conflict between a kind of "naturalism" and a kind of idealism. In Levy's view, it was Nicolai Hartmann who, following Scheler's lead, put his ontology on a firmer, more systematic footing, which Hartmann would call a "limited ontology," with no metaphysical speculation on questions of *ultimate* origins. Starting with Hartmann, Levy asks what is the structure of reality that delimits the space of politics, that space allowing what we *may* do and what we *must* do?

He cites Hartmann's objection that "the activity of man, spiritual life and historical actuality, can by no means be adequately grasped by an understanding of meaning. With this concept we are still in the air, with no firm ground under our feet." The firm ground that Hartmann means is the four strata of real being, beginning with the inorganic. The claim Hartmann makes, and Levy follows him in, is an intriguing one, that the organic rests or depends upon the inorganic; the conscious and spiritual rest on the organic, which rests on the inorganic. The upper strata rest on, but are not determined by them. There is a difference in saying that certain conditions are necessary for the forms of cultural life and political order and saying they *cause* the forms. Levy remarks that "Physical or biological determinism explains, in fact, hardly anything of the known variety of human achievement and nothing of the nature of psychic and cultural experience."

One of the consequences is a repudiation of the dream of absolute autonomy as the only freedom, relative to its own stratum of being. The world of a

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beehive is not a useful paradigm for a human world. But we can learn from the bees. The bees have the instinctual equipment and the inherited biological means of sustenance and defense. We do not, and this bears on "the significance of continuity and tradition in human life. . . . Constancy must be created and incessantly recreated through the formation and maintenance of institutions that effectively limit the range of conceivable options for the individual." Another consequence, obviously, is a repudiation of the Marxist fantasy of a "post-political" existence. In their own way the bees have already realized it.

While Hartmann's ontology provides a theory that helps us to grasp the essence of man's finite freedom, Levy finds there are certain limits to this theory, and to the anthropological perspective. Man feels compelled to search for an order that is attuned to the order inherent in the universe.

It was just such a search for order that Eric Voegelin pursued and the results of this research serve, in Levy's view, as a creative complement to the Scheler-Hartmann ontology. For Voegelin's starting point is quite different from the naturalism of Hartmann. He would call into question any theory of the human condition that confines itself to such a naturalism. Any theory would have to account for the persistence of man's search for the transcendent ground of being and the record of this search as it is reflected in revelations as man reaches out for what is not itself in his attempt at self-interpretation. This interpretation expresses itself not just in myths, but in its institutions.

The thrust of Levy's inquiry emphasizes the constant features of the human condition. The space of politics is not a boundless vacuum where any kind of imaginary project can take place precisely because of these constant features and the persistent contours of the environment. Such an idea of politics flies in the face of revolutionary ideologies that are not interested in conserving either nature or human nature, but only its transmutation. Modern technology has greatly enhanced the illusion that anything is possible, and that the only reason any scheme is not effected is a failure of politics. Guided by that superstition, if something is not to modern man's liking, someone must be to blame. The state thus becomes merely part of the "machinery of desire" and man remains vulnerable to the temptations of revolutionary ideologies that reduce the mysteries of existence to economic solutions. It is much like promising and delivering a TV for every room in the commune, but the only story or picture to watch is one of a room with a TV in a commune.

In C.S. Lewis' *The Screwtape Letters*, the Devil says, "just as we pick out and exaggerate the pleasure of eating to produce gluttony, so we pick out this natural pleasantness of change and twist it into a demand for absolute novelty." Likewise we can take our institutions, which provide us with guidance, and our technology, which helps us to maintain ourselves, and twist them to utopian schemes and ideologies, and on the way we are housed in the gulag of means.

William Mills is the author of, most recently, The Arkansas: An American River, *reviewed in this issue.*

Our Postmodern Age

by Stephen L. Tanner

Twentieth-Century Culture: Modernism to Deconstruction
by Norman F. Cantor
New York: Peter Lang;
452 pp., $39.95

◆

Eliseo Vivas once said, "I would not for a minute pretend solidarity with men who do not realize that one of the essential marks of decency today is to be ashamed of being a man of the twentieth century." He had no desire to turn the clock back; he was simply advocating that rather than playing yes men to the age we should assume the role of critics. In this survey of the culture of our century, Norman F. Cantor is certainly no yes man, but his criticism, generally very reasonable, is sometimes less than penetrating and consistent. At times it is even provokingly idiosyncratic.

Criticism, however, is not the primary aim of the book. Cantor's main objective is to bring together information from a wide variety of disciplines in order to survey and summarize the principal patterns of thought in this century. Such a comprehensive and systematic overview is not taught in our universities, he claims, and his book is an attempt to remedy this failure while also contributing to a revival of cultural and intellectual history. In previous books, he has applied his method to medieval and English history. One of his special purposes here is to lead readers across the threshold into the fashionable but intimidating chambers of current literary theory.

Beginning with an explanation of its 19th-century roots, he defines modernism and surveys its manifestations across the cultural spectrum, from the arts through science and theology. He then moves through chapters on psychoanalysis, Marxism, and the left, traditions on the right, and structuralism, deconstruction, and postmodernism. He is so comprehensive in his synthesis that individual figures and movements get only brief mention, but this concise treatment is informed and informative. He is mapping intellectual-cultural history, and the book shares the usefulness and limitations of a map. As a reference work for locating thinkers and movements within the cultural territory of this century, the book is invaluable.

But, unlike a map, the book has a specific thesis, one concerning the nature and destiny of modernism. Cantor conceives modernism as a cultural revolution that promised liberation of the human spirit followed by intellectual and cultural progress, but which now is a "paradise lost." The period of Modernism, roughly 1900 to 1940, was the creative age of our century. It was "beneficent and enjoyable." Since then we have been spending its intellectual capital. "We are living now in a cultural age of diversity, eclecticism, and uncertainty of consciousness and goals, although skills and learning abound." We need a new cultural paradigm, he says, and although in this time of uncertainty the academic and literary left is flourishing, he expects new creative movements to come from the right. He advocates "a policy of conservative humanism, of voluntarism under corporate and academic leadership addressed to strengthening the social texture and the solution of critical problems."

Cantor's breadth of coverage is im-

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pressive. He has done something that much needed doing. Conservative readers will respond positively to his respectful inclusion of rightist traditions; his perceptive appraisal of the New Left of the 60's; his recognition of the current threat of Marxism in the universities; and his desire, in the face of recent European — particularly French — influences, to protect and cultivate our indigenous intellectual traditions and national culture. Many readers will be either provoked or amused by the rather cranky personal jibes sprinkled amidst the objective summarizing: "How much anyone can owe to Bergson remains a matter of doubt"; "Libertarianism makes little sense until one has to listen to Mario Cuomo speak for ten minutes"; "It is not so easy to ascertain whether de Saussure's status arises from the intrinsic quality of his work or the fact that it was French."

But with all its useful information and insights, the book has, in my view, two large and rather puzzling deficiencies. First, in glorifying modernism, Cantor fails to recognize that in very significant ways modernism was midwife for the birth of the later cultural conditions that alarm him. He includes in his list of modernism's characteristics such things as self-referentiality, a penchant for the fragmented and discordant, moral relativism, the priority of art, and cultural despair; but he fails to recognize their inevitable consequences. Modernism was not a paradise now lost; it was a revolution that generated some dehumanizing tendencies that are still ineluctably working themselves out. For example, the seeds of deconstruction germinated in the later writing of James Joyce, and the recently proclaimed death of the author was adumbrated in T.S. Eliot's impersonal theory of poetry and the "intentional fallacy" of the New Critics.

Second, although Cantor, a professor at New York University, assumes a posture of "conservative humanism" for a survey that includes even some rather minor figures on the left and right, he makes no mention whatsoever of Irving Babbitt, Paul Elmer More, Eric Voegelin, Richard Weaver, Russell Kirk, or any other figure that might appear as author or subject in *Modern Age*. His New York provincialism blinds him to an awareness of a major cultural perspective — a perspective, incidentally, that could have enabled him to evaluate modernism more penetratingly. And this blind spot cripples his useful synthesis of 20th-century culture.

Stephen L. Tanner is a professor of English at Brigham Young University.

REVISIONS

POP LIFE

Writing on popular music tends to fall into the three predictable classes of high-, middle-, and lowbrow, and the merit of the writing is inversely proportional to the level of seriousness. Interviews and celebrity profiles often present enough interesting information to justify an occasional dip — with noseplugs in place — into *Rolling Stone*. But when the interviewer turns critic, and the critic begins putting forth "theories," the style degenerates and the information becomes suspect.

One of the best recent books on pop music is the utterly lowbrow *Off the Record: An Oral History of Popular Music*, written by the president and CEO of Capitol Industries-EMI (New York: Warner Books, 429 pp., $22.95). Joe Smith has been in the music business since the late 1950's, going from disc jockey to promoter to top executive, and along the way he has got to know most of the people who have made it on the pop music scene. This volume of brief interviews, interspersed with bits of autobiographical comment, ranges from Lionel Hampton and Artie Shaw to Bo Diddley, and Roy Orbison to John Mellencamp, Sting, and David Lee Roth.

Most of the statements are pointed and informative. Where else would you find out about a downed aviator who had himself rushed to a Duane Eddy concert in Vietnam; or about Roy Orbison's career as a songwriter — he didn't know you got paid every time a song was played; or that "Alice Cooper, the sickest band in America, were all four-year lettermen."

Some of the life histories are poignant. Most pop singers are, after all, unintelligent, uneducated, and from the underclass. Their brief moments of success are all they have, and when that's gone, so is their life. As Fabian puts it: "Nobody ever said, 'Well, gee, man, this might end.'"

Still useful but unbearably pretentious is Mark Ribowsky's *He's a Rebel: The Truth About Phil Spector — Rock and Roll's Legendary Madman* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 339 pp., $18.75). Ribowsky makes the best case he can for Phil Spector as all-around genius. "The American Wagner," as Spector likes to think of himself, was responsible for the hollow garbage-can sound of the early 60's girl groups, to say nothing of the Righteous Brothers' "You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling."

In truth, Spector is the classic alienated nerd. A liberal because he was a loser, a loner because nobody could stand him, he betrayed everyone who was nice to him, and now that he has been run out of the business, he consoles himself with firearms and bodyguards.

Even crazier than Ribowsky are Simon Frith and Howard Horne, whose *Art into Pop* (New York: Routledge, Chapman & Hall, 206 pp., $38.95) attempts to chronicle the influence of art schools on pop music. The trouble is, most of the influence would seem to be the other way around, although the authors report the largely unsubstantiated claim that "In the late sixties . . . major pop and rock stars thronged London galleries, discussing ideas with artists." The book does have a good deal of information about links between the bohemian set and avant-garde rock music, and when they come to people like David Bowie and Lou Reed, they are on solid ground. Unfortunately, they didn't bother to interview the former members of the Velvet Underground and only seem to know about Andy Warhol through the secondary accounts of other music writers.

The *reductio ad absurdum* of pop criticism is contained in the anthology *Cultural Politics in Contemporary America* edited by Ian Argus and Sut Jhally (New York: Routledge, Chapman & Hall, 388 pp., $45). Along with a few sensible pieces by Jean Bethke Elshtain and Russell Jacoby, unwary buyers will be subjecting themselves to Todd Gitlin (on "Postmodernism: Roots and Politics") among other aging New Leftists who got nowhere in politics and are now doing to the universities what they did to the campus of San Francisco State and to the streets of Chicago. (TF)

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Letter From the Lower Right

by John Shelton Reed

Gary, Martin, and John

◆

I started this letter back when David Garrow's biography of Martin Luther King appeared, with its revelations about Dr. King's sexual habits, just in time for Christmas 1986. I put it aside because I wasn't happy with it. In the summer of 1987, the Hart and Bakker scandals made me dust it off and try again. I still didn't like it. Spring of 1988, and Jimmy Swaggart prompted me to have still another try, also unsatisfactory. Now in 1989 we've already heard about John Tower's "gamy" behavior (*Time*'s adjective) and about the love life of the prime minister of Australia. It's time to try again, and this time, for better or worse, I'm going to plow through to some sort of conclusion.

Ponder this story. At a dinner party held by a foreign head of state to honor a visiting American politician, the guest of honor "fumbled Mrs. A., kissed the shrieking Miss B., pinched the plump behind of Mrs. C. black and blue, and ran at Miss D. with intent to ravish her." After reportedly behaving like a "must elephant," our countryman was carried by six sailors "by main force" back to his ship, where his wife awaited him in the public saloon cabin. Then—but let his host tell it:

> This remarkable man satiated there and then his baffled lust on the unresisting body of his legitimate spouse and copiously vomited during the operation. If you have seen Mrs.-- you will not think this incredible.

OK, who is this great American? Lots of possibilities, aren't there? This particular lecher, however, was none other than our former President and my fellow Republican U.S. Grant, whose straight-ahead amatory style apparently had much in common with his military one. His host was the viceroy of India, Earl Lytton.

This story may be as new to you as it was to me when I encountered it a couple of years ago in Paul Johnson's collection of political anecdotes. But any reader of history will know that rutting politicians are not a new thing. The 20th century has witnessed many revolting innovations, but this isn't one of them. Politics seems always to have attracted alpha males. Venery almost goes with the territory, and Gary Hart was practically a traditionalist in this respect, if no other. The Kennedy brothers, Nelson Rockefeller, Lyndon Johnson, Wilbur Mills, Wayne Hays—my fellow Tar Heel Elizabeth Ray never published her appointment book, but Washington gossip says that it was something of a Who's Who. My source says the only surprise is how many of these old goats were willing to pay for it. But at least they weren't molesting congressional pages.

Obviously many public figures have disgraceful private lives. So, of course, do many private figures. So what? My question for today is: when is this sort of thing any of our business?

In 1987 there was lot of discussion about whether the *Miami Herald* had a right to investigate Gary Hart's sex life. The general conclusion seemed to be yes, if only because Hart had virtually dared the press to do it. But a substantial minority opinion said no, that it was an unjustifiable invasion of Hart's privacy. (Oddly, or maybe not, I didn't hear anyone say that Jim Bakker's shenanigans were none of our business. Think about that.)

Now, I don't think that we're entitled to know whatever anyone can dig up about anybody at all. Private citizens have a right to privacy. Even many "public figures" within the meaning of our pitiable libel laws have that right. Moreover, I'd insist that trying to cover up one's misbehavior is itself relatively petty misbehavior. Gary Hart was far less culpable for lying than for what he did that needed lying about. Jim Bakker's sin was adultery, not paying hush money—unless the money wasn't his. La Rochefoucauld's maxim about hypocrisy is exactly to the point here. (It's "the tribute vice pays to virtue," as you may recall.)

But there are whole categories of people whose sexual and financial affairs ought to be fair game for investigative reporters and inquisitive biographers. Foremost among them are our public officials and those who seek to be public officials. We ought to be informed of their peccadilloes, even if we don't really want to know. We need to be told what kinds of people are seeking the license to speak on our behalf and to push us around. And politicians ought to be harassed anyway, on general principles. The *Herald* did right (although I hate to see the press get sanctimonious).

We're also entitled to know—indeed, obliged to inform ourselves—of shabby behavior by those who aspire to positions of *moral* leadership. People, that is, like Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart. Obviously, marital fidelity and financial integrity are not immaterial to judgments of character, and those who seek the public's confidence, and contributions, should expect the public's scrutiny.

But if the case for disclosure is made on that reasoning alone, don't we lose our right to know about the private lives of politicians who can't hurt us any more or preachers who no longer want our money? What possible "right" do we have to scurrilous stories about U.S. Grant? How can we be entitled to know about Ike's girlfriend, or Eleanor Roosevelt's?

Let's consider the case that got me started on these reflections, that of Martin Luther King, as revealed in David Garrow's book. For the record, Garrow is a former colleague and a friend of mine, although we have hardly an opinion in common. One opinion we do share, though, is that King did all of us down here a service by his part in getting the segregation monkey off our backs, and by going about it in

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the way that he did. King was a brave man and a world-historical figure. But Garrow's research in the FBI files makes it obvious that he was also a compulsive philanderer.

Maybe King felt bad about it. Maybe he suffered from what my buddy J.R. calls "the heartbreak of satyriasis." Garrow doesn't say, although Taylor Branch's new book suggests that he did. Nevertheless, King continued to misbehave even after it was perfectly plain that the walls had ears.

I don't believe we have a "right to know" about these activities. But—follow this closely, now—I don't agree with those who argue that Garrow shouldn't have reported them. I'd argue that David had *no right* to suppress what he learned. Like the courts, good truth-telling scholarship and journalism require the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Scholars and journalists should not withhold facts that are part of the story that they are telling (as Jack Kennedy's hagiographers presumably did).

And certainly not from fear of consequences. Shortly after Garrow's book appeared, a historian worried in my presence about "what happens when the rednecks get hold of this." Well, brother (I told him), I've got news for you: the rednecks already knew about this. They were telling me about it a quarter-century ago. In my youthful Freudian wisdom I thought they were "projecting," and they may have been, but even a blind hog gets an acorn sometimes. What's more, all of my friends with even the remotest connection to "the movement" now assure me that, of course, they knew all about this, too. If Garrow's revelations haven't had much in the way of political consequences, it may be because I'm the only American who *didn't* know that King was a womanizer.

But even if those revelations somehow discredited the movement as well as its leader, I think Garrow was obliged to report them. When biographers learn something that sheds light on their subjects' characters, or when journalists learn something newsworthy about figures in the public eye, the canons of their profession rightly require that they tell us. In other words, once Garrow learned about King's sex life, he could tell us about it or drop his project altogether, but he had no right to present a distorted picture.

I know an anthropologist who disagrees. Basically, like the historian, she fears that Garrow's account will give aid and comfort to the bad guys. It's not surprising that this same woman once wrote a book that didn't mention the economic base of the community she studied, which was burglary. She felt that it would put the community in an unfavorable light; people, she said, "wouldn't understand." But public relations be damned: her job as an anthropologist was to *make* us understand, to tell us about that community. And she didn't do it. She should have helped us to see what that activity looks like from inside—where, I'm sure, it looks very different.

Just so, Garrow would have been wrong not to tell us what he learned about King. He was writing scholarly biography, not a brief for canonization. If I have a quarrel with him, it's that he doesn't begin to explain what he found—indeed, doesn't seem to recognize that anything needs explaining.

On the other hand, it seems to me that the FBI had not only the right but the obligation to suppress that information. *Their* job isn't biography—in fact, they ought to be in the business of keeping secrets. It's appalling that they had those motel-room tapes in the first place; bugging King's room was a gross violation of an American citizen's rights, impossible to justify even by the well-founded suspicion that one of his pals was a Communist. But releasing the tapes or transcripts to people like Dave Garrow compounds the offense. And the fact that the Bureau had no choice under the Freedom of Information Act strikes me as still another reason that law needs rethinking. Where does this stop? Can I take those FBI tapes and produce an LP?

I'm unhappy to learn about this aspect of Dr. King's life. I don't think the world is a better place because we know about it, and it may be worse. But I'm not sore at Garrow for doing his job. I'm sore at the FBI for eavesdropping in the first place, and for releasing this material in the second.

As for Martin Luther King—well, I find I'm becoming more tolerant in large matters, less so in small (people can't always keep their marriage vows, but they can turn their damn radios down). Still, I'm sore at Dr. King for his unwillingness or inability to keep his pants on. There would have been nothing to tape, nothing to release, nothing to publish, nothing to explain, if King had behaved as a clergyman—hell, as a husband—ought. There is a cruel irony in the fact that this man, who made such a powerful appeal to conscience, should himself have had a conscience in this respect so manifestly inadequate.

Political and moral leaders ought to behave themselves for the same reason as the rest of us, and for one more reason, peculiar to themselves: misbehavior by a leader betrays his cause. Religious broadcasting will be a long time recovering from the blows that Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart dealt it. The political allies of Gary Hart and John Tower aren't likely to forgive them anytime soon. Martin Luther King endangered not only his own good name, but the movement he led.

John Shelton Reed has recently returned to Chapel Hill, North Carolina, from Catalonia.

Letter From the Heartland

by Jane Greer

Waking Up Middle-Aged in the New Age

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There I was, nearly 36, being paid to do mundane work (but not paid nearly enough), unable to finish any of the large writing projects I'd been working at, and victim of a series of professional disappointments. This was a far cry from the international literary fame I'd envisioned at age 19. I was *old*, and this was *life*: nothing would ever get better.

Then the New Age came to my rescue.

In desperation, I had begun listening to a set of self-help motivational tapes. Dear God, they were like M&M's to a chocaholic! I learned that *I* was in charge of my own destiny; that it's what's *inside* me that counts, not what's going on around me. I learned to make goals, and my little notebook was never far from me. I boned up on my assertiveness.

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Still, something seemed not quite right.

The grand dame of the New Age was the medium Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, who in 1875 founded the Theosophical Society and taught that we can benefit from listening to spirit "Masters." Leadership of the order eventually passed to Alice Ann Bailey, who established Lucifer Publishing Company in 1922, changing the name to "Lucis" in 1923. When the psychedelic 1960's effected the wholehearted acceptance of drugs and astrology in the civilized world, the stage was set for the popularization of *all* New Age tenets.

For a quick glance at the New Age, riffle through *The New Age Catalog* (1988). Learn about Lucifer, channeling, developing your psychic skills, reading an aura, and using crystals. Order tapes on palmistry, reflexology, dowsing, firewalking, and dying (from people who have done it). Discover that less is more when it comes to money (except for the prices on this stuff) and what Christ *really* said to his disciples.

This is what's at the heart of the New Age, and I'll come back to it—but it isn't the aspect that most New Age leaders choose to show us. The seduction of the New Age lies in its leaders' gift of *saying exactly what we want to hear.*

When they founded CareerTrack in 1982, Jimmy Calano and Jeff Salzman, two nice-looking, clean-cut young guys of 24 and 27, respectively, with a healthy appetite for money (no "less is more" for them), cashed in on Americans' double urge to, as we say, "feel good about ourselves" and prosper without doing anything really hard. CareerTrack, in Boulder, Colorado, sells self-help tapes and seminars across the nation and internationally. The topics are hardly esoteric—time management, organizational politics, dealing with difficult people, business writing, reading dynamics—and for the most part they're taught by hard-nosed Ph.D.'s and psychologists and businesspeople. CareerTrack revolutionized the business seminar industry by offering under-$50-per-day tuition when the industry average was $145 per day. Sales in 1982 were at $220,000. In 1988 they hit $52 million—all without a cent of outside financing.

Calano and Salzman work *very* hard. Last year Calano was named the fifth-best entrepreneur under 30 in the nation by the Young Entrepreneurs' Organization, and *Inc.* named CareerTrack the tenth fastest-growing privately held company in the US. I own some CareerTrack tapes and have attended one of their seminars, and, far from trying to rip anyone off, they're doing their best to give people their money's worth. (For instance, they guarantee that you can get a refund on a CareerTrack tape or even a seminar up to one year after you buy the tape or attend the seminar, no questions asked.) These guys would join the Peace Corps before they'd attend a seance, and in their honest earnestness they're typical of many self-help companies.

They're also as New Age as you can get. Because New Age philosophy teaches that Man is God, that the answer to every problem is *within* us. And the kooks in *The New Age Catalog* use precisely the same language and methods as the pinstriped Ph.D.'s selling assertiveness training. Very few self-help seminars instruct us in prayer.

The New Age would have us believe that *we* can control our lives—which should make us skeptical right off the bat since it's flatly contrary to Western religious teaching. (But see: we *want* to hear that we're the boss.) First, it's important to set goals in elaborate detail, in writing. (*Would you like to leave a lover or spouse?* many seminar-givers ask coyly. *Well, then, put it down. This is your "wish list." Go crazy.*)

Next, engage in creative visualization, which simply means imagining, in detail, doing the things you said you'd like to do. Part of the trick is to use affirmations, (false) statements saying that you already do or have whatever it is you said you wanted to do or have. You must repeat these lies to yourself first thing in the morning and last thing at night.

Get rid of that useless guilt. All of these people—especially the psychologists—will tell you that guilt is the most useless emotion there is. Toss it away! Shrug it off! (This will most certainly be a relief to those people who set a goal of ditching a spouse and then did it.) And keep up that motivation! Tell yourself, "I can have what I want. I *deserve* it. Nothing has to stand in my way. I have power. I empower *myself.*"

It's important to say here that not all purveyors of motivational tapes and books belong to the New Age. One who most emphatically does *not* is Zig Ziglar. He gives three important clues that he's a nonmember. One is his constant reminder that what we want to do is hard. The second is his belief that if you work hard for something and it just doesn't happen, perhaps you've been working at the wrong thing. And the third is his frequent references to God, Scripture, and prayer. You'll never hear any of this from a New Ager.

John Joseph, a Carmelite brother and student of the dangers of the New Age, warns, "Many people middle-aged and older have fallen into the New Age Movement, a world-wide network consisting of tens of thousands of cooperating organizations." What are all these people after? Well, whether they know it or not (and most of them do not), the goal of the New Age is, ultimately, to bring the world to the worship of Lucifer.

Now, maybe your church group is into "possibility thinking" and you're not prepared to believe that Devil-worship underlies New Age help-yourself thought. Still, consider the Old and New Testament lessons teaching us to obey *God's* will, and then understand that New Age adherents believe that we create our *own* reality. You can't eat your cake and have it, too.

And there are other, even better hooks to catch normal people than greed or selfishness. The New Age also appeals to mankind's nobler motives. Joseph writes, "This is where the Hunger Project, Bread for the World, and a host of other projects . . . fit into New Age plans. Too often, those initially attracted by such good works fall prey to the false philosophies of the New Age (which, even in its charitable undertakings, is strong on impossible global solutions and weak on personal reform)."

The peril of these New Age practices is that they *work* somehow—for a time: long enough for the New Agers to get a stranglehold on a mind. I really *was* invigorated, cheerful, and more in

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control after my morning visualization and goal-recording sessions. And all that nutty out-of-body travel and channeling and firewalking—people really do *that*, too. Books written by sensible, grown-up, traditionally religious Christians and Jews about their youthful experiments with New Age practices testify that they experienced occult phenomena, often without the help of drugs. I fooled around with yoga long enough in my late teens and early 20's to know that out-of-body travel must be fairly easy, if you want it badly enough.

What finally brought me out of my blessedly short-lived New Age trance is this: the vague feeling that I was falling into peril. The New Age's motto is, "*My* will be done." The only thing New Agers see as evil is the thwarting of their own aims, either individually or as a handsome, menacing group. But New Agers are not often thwarted; they breed in a culture they themselves created. Listen to the radio; watch TV. Read one of the best-sellers offering "global" advice to "Spaceship Earth" on everything from investment to the whales. Look at "Christian" bookstores, selling books and tapes on meditation and "self-fulfillment." Consider the church, with its clowns, balloons, rock music, and utter lack of silence and sanctity regardless of denomination, attempting, as John Joseph says, to "reshape orthodox Christianity according to the mind of man."

The mind of man is a very small place—thank God He doesn't live there.

Jane Greer edits Plains Poetry Journal.

Letter From Washington

by Samuel Francis

Yuppie Cons

◆

In the 1950's, American conservatives, subscribing to what Clinton Rossiter called the "thankless persuasion," were a hard-shelled, pig-eyed lot who took no prisoners and asked no quarter. *National Review*, in a once-famous but now largely forgotten editorial in its premier issue, vowed that its mission was to stand athwart history and cry stop. Admittedly, this was hardly the most fetching advertisement with which to inaugurate a political and intellectual movement, but it reveals the grim mentality of the American right of that era.

In the 1980's, the new breed of conservatives, of whom Rep. Newt Gingrich and Housing and Urban Development Secretary Jack Kemp are representative, is at pains to distance itself from that mentality. Its exponents seize every opportunity to make known their differences with a school of thought and politics that scorned the enlargement of the state and the slogans of "mandate," "crusade," and "vision" that legitimized it. What is now somewhat deprecatingly called the Old Right despised the notion that the government should help redesign the society it was supposed to protect, expressed contempt for the utopian effervescence of progressivism, and espoused a deep loyalty to and affection for its country and the historic culture and people who defined the country.

What some are calling "progressive conservatism" parts company with the Old Right on all these fronts. Last winter, during a Republican strategy conference at which Mr. Gingrich presided, the talk was all about how to sever whatever links remain between the conservatism of the past and the translucent future that the new Minority Whip wants to personify. "We're going to have to start talking, for example, about civil rights and affirmative action [to appeal to black voters] in ways that we haven't before and that may offend some conservatives," one "key conservative theorist" was quoted as saying. "We have to have a caring, humanitarian, reform Republican Party," said Mr. Gingrich himself, "that accepts the burden of being a governing conservatism, not just an opposition conservatism." "We have to get over the hump of being the parsimonious, anti-compassion, anti-humanitarian party which really doesn't care if people starve in the streets as long as the budget is balanced," said Republican strategist Jeffrey Eisenach, one of Mr. Gingrich's close advisers. "I never thought, frankly," said New Right leader Paul Weyrich, "that I would sit in a Republican meeting and hear the terms 'crusade to save the children.'"

Mr. Kemp, too, seems enthusiastic about the new role that the federal government will enjoy. Early in his brief-lived campaign for the presidency in 1987, Mr. Kemp promised that

LIBERAL ARTS

L'ART POUR L'ARGENT

Andy was desperate for ideas. "What'll I do next?" he kept asking his new art-world friends. Ivan Karp and Henry Geldzahler had urged Andy to develop images that were not being used by anyone else, but he couldn't think of any. One evening in early 1962, in the apartment over Shirley's Pin-Up, Muriel Latow told Andy she had an idea but it would cost him money to hear it. Muriel ran an art gallery that was going broke. "How much?" Andy asked her. Muriel said, "Fifty dollars." Andy went straight to the desk and wrote out a check.

"All right," Muriel said. "Now, tell me, Andy, what do you love more than anything else?"

"I don't know," Andy said. "What?"

"Money," Muriel said. "Why don't you paint money?"

Andy thought that was a terrific idea.

—*from* The Scene: Reports on Post-Modern Art *by Calvin Tomkins, 1976*

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"'Getting the government off the backs of the American people' will be no one's slogan in 1988. Making government more efficient and more effective will be the thing this time. I've never understood why conservatives positioned themselves against government." Mr. Weyrich added, "the truth is that some of us believe in government activism. . . . too often, we have attempted to reject the obligation welfare represents, the obligation to the poor, the homeless, the unemployed and the disabled. . . . We accept the obligation welfare represents."

The zest for government activism appears to be the center of the new conservative vision. That alone would dissociate it from the antistatist conservatism of the past, but more is involved in the transfiguration of the American right than a mere tactical change of instruments by which its political leaders may work their will.

The changes in thought and rhetoric that distinguish "progressive conservatism" from its predecessors of the Old Right reflect a significant social and demographic transformation of American political culture. Whereas Old Right conservatism was by and large the expression of the interests, values, and aspirations of the American bourgeois elite, the new political formulas express those of a relatively recent elite of urbanized, technocratic professionals who make their living and gain power and status in mass organizations. This new "managerial" elite, as James Burnham called it, displaced the older bourgeoisie as the dominant force in politics, the economy, and culture in the early 20th century. Between the Depression and the end of World War II it seized power at the national level, and in the 1960's, through the New Frontier and the Great Society, embarked on what it thought would be the final mop-up of its bourgeois rival.

The new elite found a rationale for its aspirations to power in the ideology of liberalism, which offered justifications for the enlargement of the state and its fusion with other mass organizations—corporations and unions in the economy, mass universities, large foundations, and the mass media in the managerial cultural apparatus. The cosmopolitan and universalist ethos of liberalism served to challenge bourgeois moral and social codes and attachment to local and national institutions, while liberal meliorism and progressivism legitimized the new elite's application of its technocratic and managerial skills to government, the economy, and society.

With the exhaustion and discrediting of liberal ideology in the 1960's and 1970's, however, the elite had to formulate a new ideology. This is where "progressive conservatism" comes in.

In the 1980's, the younger members of the managerial elite came to be known as "yuppies," and though they questioned many of the policies of New Deal-Great Society liberalism, they retained its cosmopolitan and essentially materialistic values and showed little hesitancy about using governmental power against persistent social and cultural institutions to create "openness," "opportunity," and "democracy." They also became enamored of new technologies that seemed to promise all sorts of secular salvations, from the end of war and poverty to the global unification of government and culture, and that offered endless frontiers for the utilization of their esoteric skills.

"Progressive conservatism" and its ideological siblings are designed to capture and mobilize the young (now tending toward middle-aged) urban professionals of the managerial elite. The Republican Party may not need them to win elections—they have plain old Middle Americans, who have nowhere else to go, for that—but it does need them to govern. The federal government, the congressional staffs, and the think tanks and media institutions on which neoconservatives and progressive conservatives depend simply can't operate without them.

The union of the Republican Party with the managerial elite and its apparatus in the government means the end of an era in American political culture. Bourgeois conservatism and its determination to stop history and get off has become a moribund political and intellectual force, because the social formation that supported it and the values and interests of which bourgeois conservatism was an expression are extinct or dying. The progressives come not to praise, let alone restore the bourgeois order, but to bury it; not to stand athwart history and cry stop but to clamber on board, toot the horn, and press the throttle full steam ahead. If there is to be any resistance to or restraint on the managerial state and its interminable war against what remains of American culture, it can come from neither the progressive conservatism of Gingrich and Kemp nor the bourgeois conservatism of the Old Right, but from some new force that has not yet taken shape.

Samuel Francis is deputy editorial page editor of The Washington Times.

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YIPPIES OR YUPPIES?

Drug song lyrics may, in fact, be the entire literary output of the hippie generation. The hippies' general disregard for anything as static as a book is a fact over which Chester Anderson and Marshall McLuhan can shake hands. For acid heads are, in McLuhan's phrase, "post-literate." Hippies do not share our written, linear society—they like textures better than surfaces, prefer the electronic to the mechanical, like group, tribal activities. Theirs is an ecstatic, do-it-now culture, and rock and roll is their art form.

—*from "A Social History of the Hippies" by Warren Hinckle, in the March 1967 issue of* Ramparts

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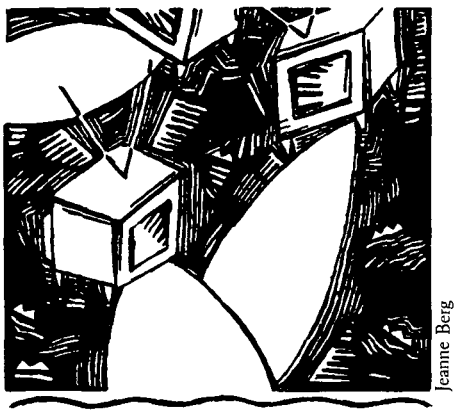

Jeanne Berg

The World's Best Bad Magazines

by Janet Scott Barlow

The below are little collections of information I picked up from, respectively, *Esquire* and GQ.

> The world's finest ready-made suits are found in America. The world's most intriguing men's store is in Italy. The world's best harmonicas come from Germany.
>
> Fifteen percent of all furs in the United States are sold to males. Some men tint their chest hair to match the hair on their head. The figures on a paisley necktie do not signify the male seed.

I consider this dustball knowledge, the kind that will go straight into my mental attic, where it will be neither used nor discarded for the rest of my life. I don't need it, I don't want it, but I'll never be able to get rid of it. It would be easier for me to empty my mind of my own phone number than of *Esquire*'s description of a German-designed faucet: "an aquatic Varga." Such is the nature of these magazines — upscale publications for style-obsessed men — that they make indelible what in any other context would be utterly forgettable. This is not a compliment.

Then why do I read them? I read them because I can't quite believe they exist. I read them because I don't understand them. I am sure that there are across this country countless men who bought last November's GQ precisely because the cover promised a feature called "A Real Guy's Guide to Hair Coloring." These men opened the issue, found the article, and read the first sentence: "Stockbrokers, doctors, and lawyers are starting to consider their hair as much a power statement as their suit and tie." And then a profound thing happened. The men *didn't laugh*. What I keep trying to figure out is: why not? (I have the feeling that a move to New York would clarify everything; but some prices are too high, even for enlightenment.)

GQ is published as a lifestyle magazine for "The Modern Man." Actually it is, as the title of the hair coloring article makes clear, a magazine for Guys — post-adolescent boys who are finally old enough to drink, "build" wardrobes, and spend time alone with women, and finally hip enough to demonstrate "humor and sophistication" in the process. Aside from sometimes-interesting monthly columns by Ron Powers (television) and Mordecai Richler (books), and an occasional semi-meaty article (never the one on the celebrity cover-Guy), GQ strives to be no more (and no less) than The Voice of Real Guyhood.

The Voice of Real Guyhood is, above all, a personalized voice. Whether the subject is cars ("As I entered college, I plotted to establish my automotive identity") or the history of boxer shorts ("As a member of the generation brought up in briefs, I'm here to say that boxers take some getting used to"), the GQ writer's real focus is his own ever-interesting Guy-self. The resultant effect is akin to that awful ironic self-awareness found among women writers who are always longing for bigger breasts and slimmer thighs. The idea seems to be that narcissism can be made charming by a selective display of self-mockery.

Even a serious subject like vasectomy is, in GQ, just another opportunity for some Guy-type fun. In an article devoid of information but long on the kind of elbow nudging, sexist humor and male anatomy jokes normally encountered only in regressive fourteen-year-old boys, someone named Terry Sullivan shared with fellow Guys the story of his vasectomy. The article's title? "A Cut Below." Get it? It was a writing performance for which Mr. Sullivan should have been sent to his room and denied TV privileges until he could control himself. Guys being Guys, GQ paid him instead.

GQ's main Guy about town is Richard Merkin, author of the column Merkin on Style. Merkin's method as a writer and cultural observer is to tell great chunks of his life story before reaching a negative judgment on, say, Pee-Wee Herman. It is necessary to understand this about Richard Merkin, otherwise it would make no sense at all that in a column supposedly about "two of New York's most witty men's shops," he first recounts, at length, his sexual awakening: "I myself discovered women in 1950, just about the time the Bronx Bombers buried the Whiz Kids in the Autumn Classic. I am relatively certain that they — women, that is — were already in existence. . . ." Cute.

On those occasions when Merkin's memory well runs dry, he falls back on that shameless journalistic device, the off-the-top-of-my-head collection, the pop-off column, the list — what Merkin refers to as a "helping of bouquets, brickbats, and plain old observations by Nobody Else but Me."

In a recent column-list, Richard Merkin actually dragged out the dancing fat man stereotype: "You show me a fat man who dresses well and I'll show you a deft and fabulous dancer." Then, for reasons known only to him, Mr. Nobody Else but Me asked, "Hey, whatever happened to those marvelous, stuffy English names such as Archibald or Reginald or Algernon? Truthfully now, how long has it been since you were introduced to a guy named Cedric?" Since random changes of direction are the name of the game in these little exercises, Mer-

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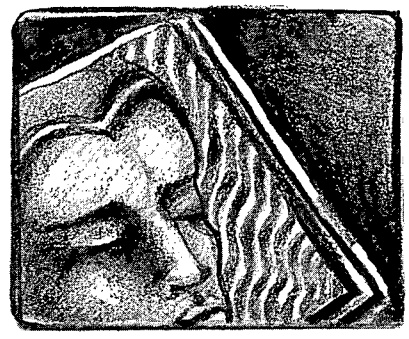
kin suddenly lurched off into sports: "Now, if only some ball team with vision and reverence for tradition and continuity would bring back those wonderful old baggy flannel uniforms, maybe I could look forward to spring training with enthusiasm. . . . How about you?" How about me? Me, I think that if ball players took the field wearing "those wonderful old baggy flannel uniforms," they'd look really dumb. But then, I'm not a Guy, so what do I know? Not only do I not see flannel as an expression of reverence, I don't find entertaining the mere mention of the name Cedric.

If GQ is little more than a grinning celebration of Guyhood, at least it lacks pomposity. The same cannot be said for *Esquire*, a magazine that rejects Guyhood in favor of the "steadfast coverage of character realized." Folks, *Esquire* is "intended for men who are no longer in the process of becoming men, but for men who *are* men." It is a "publication of unswerving character, one that keeps alive all that is timeless and classic in a man's life. . . ." It is a "magazine consumed with passion—for words, for pictures, for the good life intensely lived." Most of all, *Esquire* is "a kind of sanctuary where we can share the male experience with like-minded friends, there to stimulate the mind and the senses."

In case you haven't guessed, *Esquire* is a suffocatingly self-conscious publication. It takes itself so seriously that it regularly gives out, with great fanfare, all kinds of self-styled awards. There is the *Esquire* Register, a long list of people saluted "for the roles they will play in molding America as we approach the turn of the century." There is the Esky Award (complete with gold statuette), inaugurated in 1988 to honor "those who have truly hit the heights this year," e.g., Ann Richards, the United Airlines terminal at O'Hare Airport, and "The Six-Button, Double-Breasted Suit."

And not to be overlooked is *Esquire*'s annual Women We Love issue, which is devoted to women with "wit and power and guts and glamour and mystery and depth" (coincidentally all the qualities that *Esquire* as a magazine lacks). So proud were *Esquire*'s editors with their most recent list of women they love that they blurted, "We want to *swim* in this list. We want to swan dive into it. . . ." That should have been a hint to any woman of wit, power, guts, glamour, mystery, and depth to beg, bribe, or sue her way off the list, because things could only go downhill from there. *Esquire*'s homage to Audrey Hepburn—in its entirety: "Not content to sit around on her class." Of dogsledder Susan Butcher: "[She] just turns our minds to mush." And then there was *Esquire*'s unforgettable tribute to actress Sonia Braga: "How do you say, 'We'd like to drink your bathwater' in Portuguese?" It makes you wonder, doesn't it? Does this kind of stuff come under the heading of sharing "the male experience with like-minded friends"? Or is it supposed to be an expression of "character realized"? I have my own ideas on this. As Richard Merkin might say, you show me a Man whose idea of stimulating "the mind and the senses" is to talk about drinking a woman's bathwater, and I'll show you a Man who's just a Guy.



When *Esquire* is not giving out awards no one cares about, or sweeping women off their feet with its sweet talk, it is devoting itself, by way of its Man At His Best section (*Esquire*'s "anthem," according to editor Eisenberg), to the most important things in a Man's life: cars, clothes, food, booze, and home furnishings. If, for instance, "the good life intensely lived" requires knowing how and where to get "the world's best beef jerky," *Esquire* has the answer. (By mail order, of course, from Texas, at 12 bucks a pound. No Man At His Best is going to stop off at the 7-Eleven for his beef jerky.) For those with more sophisticated tastes, *Esquire* offers elaborate recipes, such as "Hare in the Style of Tuscan Hill Towns" (a horrifying concoction, by the way. Not even the lure of the good life intensely lived could attract me to a recipe that brings together, in the same dish, red wine, melted chocolate, and "a five pound hare").

Unfortunately, it is not possible to discuss *Esquire* without discussing its most distinctive contributor, a columnist who, when he isn't attempting to buy his own high school ("a dream come true"), is recalling the funeral of Elvis Presley ("and there was Elvis, dead . . . his eyes, of course, were closed"). I am talking about Bob Greene, the Man who wants to be a kid and is proud to say it.

The best way to describe Bob Greene as a writer is to say that he casts a whole new light on the Guys over at GQ. His style makes Richard Merkin seem like a breath of fresh air. And his regular wallows down memory lane can make some readers decide, "My God, I'd rather be hearing about Terry Sullivan's vasectomy." For Bob Greene, the preoccupations of Guyhood would be an emotional step forward. He isn't in love with pseudo-adulthood; he's in love with adolescence. He wants to "hang around the gym," talk about his feelings, and be misunderstood by grown-ups.

Bob Greene's writing is just one example of the triteness with which some men will depict their own lives. *Esquire* and GQ offer many variations of that example, but in the end the magazines accomplish the same thing: they trivialize manhood by glorifying something called "the male experience." This can get tiresome.

But what is most striking to someone who isn't a Man or a Guy is the essential gracelessness of these publications. They are big, good-looking, and dopey. For all their sheen, neither *Esquire* nor GQ has a clue as to what's funny and what isn't. They think power hair is serious business, while vasectomies are a laugh a minute. They believe that "sit around on her class" is an expression of wit, but see nothing funny in giving the same award to both a human being and a suit. And they don't understand that talk of "character realized" is hilarious in a magazine that makes jokes about women's bathwater. What's next for these arbiters of style and sophistication—joy buzzers and whoopee cushions?

Janet Scott Barlow covers popular culture from Cincinnati.

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Jeanne Berg

Adverpop Rock

by Gary S. Vasilash

Doctors are prohibited from hawking products in television commercials. It's a question of ethics. So, since the real ones can't do it, stand-ins are asked to fill the prescription. Marcus Welby was never jumpy—and probably wouldn't have been even if he had accidentally reversed the electric paddles used to jump-start a heart—so Robert Young became a very appropriate shill for Sanka. Then there are those characters from *General Hospital*, good-featured robots one and all, who push analgesics while wearing white lab coats, and admitting, "I'm not a doctor," a confession that undoubtedly results in heads shaken in disbelief in trailer parks across the land. There is a sense that doctors belong to a higher order, some belief they are apart from mere mortals that, perhaps, justifies our baring all to them.

Just as people might feel let down if real doctors were able to endorse cough syrup, there is an entire generation that feels a certain amount of dismay—not quite throwing them down to the cellar of their souls, but at least to the lower level of a tri-level house in the suburbs—every time they turn on a TV set and hear and/or see (a) one of the songs they grew up with being used to push fabric softener or toothpaste; (b) a maker of that music crooning on behalf of a brewer. It's like turning on the set and seeing a priest pushing the services of a post-Freudian psychologist. Formative experiences are suddenly put on par with dandruff shampoo.

Steve Winwood, the man who is certainly becoming the Crazy Eddie of upscale advertising, recently told *Rolling Stone* that he thinks there is no problem with his musical trafficking in Michelob. He said that he is an "entertainer," and as such, it's his role simply to get his music to as large an audience as possible. No, Stevie, no! Engelbert Humperdinck is an entertainer. You're more than that . . . aren't you? The answer to that question is yes: he's a pragmatist and a person who is honest—to a far greater degree than most people are in public—about the music business of today. I suspect that if Barry Manilow, who was relentlessly pilloried for having been a jingle writer, were to start his career today, his record sales would be exceeded only by the volume of admiration that the likes of Winwood would have for him. It would have been Manilow as the Master, not the Schlockmeister. He must feel pangs when he hears Aretha Franklin crooning for Chevy and Target Department Store; he must have experienced déjà vu like a jackhammer during the Super Bowl when the song George Michael wrote and performed for Diet Coke was played.

The dismay that people feel upon hearing their favorite tunes being used to sell comes about not only because they may have had a profound (e.g., backseat-of-a-Pontiac-Catalina) experience while the music was playing, but because there was, and is, a belief that the songwriter/performer (always imagined to be one in the same) was an artist, a poet. This notion was based, in part, on the personas of the musicians themselves, at least in the 1960's. These people presented themselves as being far more enlightened than the ordinary mortal on the other side of the transistor radio. This stance is not only evident in the Lennon comment about the Beatles' popularity exceeding that of Christ, which inferentially put the Fab Four above the Trinity, but in Jim Morrison's posturing as a shaman. It was the 19th-century Romantic concept of the artist as an enlightened one—a visionary like Blake—revisited.

As the 60's gave way to the 70's, this characterization of rock "artist" was given further legitimacy by the inclusion of lyrics by Paul Simon, Bob Dylan, and others in secondary literature texts. Isn't "I Am a Rock" simply John Donne brought up to date?

Although the operative term in the 80's has been "star," at least until the rise of performers like Tracy Chapman, Suzanne Vega, and Michelle Shocked, all of whom harken back to the Simon/Dylan tradition, the official appellation for someone who puts music on a tape and stage for a company is "recording artist," as in an announcement for a group, "Band X, WEA recording artists, will appear . . ." The term *artist* is used not so much to signify creativity as commodity.

Recently, while walking through a nonpublic area at the North American International Show in Detroit, I saw a sign outside a room that read "Chrysler Talent." The sign didn't refer to Chrysler Chairman Lee Iacocca, nor to its president Gerald Greenwald, but to the men and mainly women who performed in and around the automobiles on the Chrysler displays. The meaning of the word *talent* on the sign didn't refer to the individuals' abilities and aptitudes; rather, the term had a generic connotation, more akin to something like *beef*. And that's, essentially, how the term *artist* is used when modified by the word *recording*.

While many people would like to imagine that rock singers are slitting open veins and revealing their souls through their music, most are actually turning out packaged items that are not wholly unlike those served up by McDonald's—at least if they are lucky.

The original rebels of rock, people like Mick Jagger and Pete Townshend, have certainly become homogenized, if not fully curdled, as was evident at this year's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony. Jagger commented, "It's ironic you're seeing us on our good behavior when we're being honored for 25 years of bad behavior." The graying Peter Pan was being some twenty years generous with the Stones' alleged notoriety. It's difficult to skewer the bourgeoisie when you need a SWAT team of accountants to calculate and protect your annual income.

Meanwhile, Townshend, whose increasing forehead glistened with beads of righteous perspiration, talked about the possibility of The Who getting

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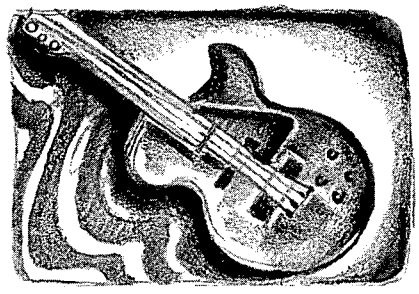
back together for a tour. "Everything is perfectly in place. It's our 25th anniversary." Does Townshend actually believe that a generation that now wields briefcases and Filofaxes will stand on chairs in auditoriums and sing with one bold voice, "We won't get fooled again"? Probably not. A Who reunion would simply make good business sense, just as Jagger and Keith Richards, who had been sniping at one another for months before the ceremony, made a financially prudent decision to play Bob Hope and Bing Crosby on



the stage of the Waldorf-Astoria ballroom.

Music journalism, at least that which seriously treats pop and rock, rarely discusses who's influencing whom anymore. Instead, it's becoming more like the pieces in *Barron's*, *Forbes*, and *Fortune*. Is it relevant to know that the divorce settlement between Bruce Springsteen and Julianne Phillips supposedly includes $16 million for the ex-Mrs. Boss if she won't write a book about the two who really weren't born to run? That depends on one's interest. And the interest in rock is measured today in the same manner as T-Bills.

Adam Smith, writing in the February issue of *Esquire* about trying to earn a living as a writer, observes, "Looking at the field from the Eighties point of view — optimum financial return — you would have to advise the graduating seniors to try investment banking or to take a real long shot in rock music." The 80's: "optimum financial return."

Speaking of returns, let's look into a magazine that's read by a gang who will probably never bother with the put-on gentility of *Esquire* — *Thrasher* magazine, the book of skateboarders who spend most of their hours, waking and nodding, ripping. Here's the lead item in the February "Notes" department: "Rumor of the Month: The Sex Pistols are getting back together. John 'Rotten' Lydon has allegedly been approached with a six million dollar offer to lead the original Pistols (minus one) on a six-date U.S. tour." Note how the six million isn't meant to raise an eyebrow; only the oblique reference to the missing Mr. Sid Vicious is calculated to get a rise. Six dates, six mil: that's optimum.

An illuminating examination of the big money aspect of today's pop/rock music scene is *Facing the Music* (edited by Simon Frith; Pantheon Books), which sheds light on the area that few fans would like to see, despite the fact that it's the predominant feature of what gets on the airwaves.

Ken Barnes, writing in "Top 40 Radio: A Fragment of the Imagination," one of the five essays in the collection, makes several revealing observations about what gets played, heard, and, ideally, bought. He explains that commercial radio stations, which number about 10,000, compete for about $7.7 billion in ad revenues, which is a fraction of the $110 billion spent for all advertising media. The story is a simple one: "Really, it all boils down to economics." Station owners want to sell enough time to make money or to make their stations takeover targets. Most of the businesses buying time to sell their wares are interested in the twenty-five-to-forty-nine-year-old age group, so the music to their collective ears is what program directors must schedule. According to Barnes, "years of meticulous research reveals that people like familiar music. In fact, research tells radio today that most people like familiar *older* music better than familiar-sounding new music." Ever wonder why you can never seem to escape Led Zepplin, especially "Stairway to Heaven," no matter where in the US you tune in? There's your answer.

Simon Frith buttresses this in his scrutiny of who makes it to the top in the pop/rock world. It tends to be that group or individual who can be packaged most effectively for broad use, not whoever manages to scratch his way to the top from the lousy bar scene, through cheap labels (often getting nicked by a manager or two), the hit, the road, and then easy street. Frith observes, "It has been calculated that a major campaign in the United States surrounding a single track, which may be used to sell an album or to establish a star, is half-a-million dollars." Consider what's at issue here: return on investment. Sure things are where the money goes. Frith says, "In material terms, the traditional rock consumer — the 'rebellious' teenager — is no longer the central market figure; the most obvious teen musics, like heavy metal and hard core punk, are thus now marginal to mainstream pop culture." Everyone into the water: meet you in the mainstream.

Mary Harron, in "McRock: Pop as a Commodity," maintains, "The lust for glory, the scheming for quick money and quick fame are all part of pop music's vitality and have been ever since Elvis Presley went after his first gold suit." Which is true, though the difference today is that a gold suit is banal: the real trick is to have the millions of a Springsteen and to wear a pair of worn Levis and a T-shirt while pretending they are legit.

The stock market crashes and picks itself up and learns to run; the music industry faltered at the start of the 80's, then broke into a spirited moonwalk. The ones who suffer from this state of affairs are both musicians and listeners. Good, bad, or indifferent music doesn't tend to get a hearing, despite the large number of outlets for music. For example, as Barnes points out about country music, "There is almost no way for young listeners to become attracted to country unless they stumble onto a country station and stick around long enough to hear something they like; they can't hear the music anywhere else." Unless a big label wants to pick up a k.d. lang or a Randy Travis. And the same holds true for speed metal, fusion jazz, and any number of different forms. Instead, we become wrapped in cotton batting, musical memories, and blandness measured to sell.

And there, on VH-1, during the "Rod Stewart Weekend" (remember when he was "Rod the Mod"? Remember what "mod" meant?), a Sears commercial for its Kenmore appliances appears, and a cover version of Crosby, Stills and Nash's "Our House" drones in the background.

Gary S. Vasilash lives in Detroit.

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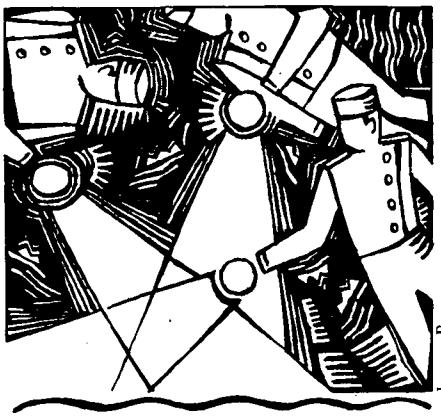

Jeanne Berg

LA's Cult of the Dead

by K.L. Billingsley

One of the many hearses that ply Hollywood Boulevard is different from all the others. The long gray Cadillac sports a sunroof, air-conditioning, and a cargo of live bodies, not dead ones. The vehicle is the flagship of Grave Line Tours, and every day its driver leads his seven passengers, each with a window seat, on what is most emphatically not the standard movieland excursion.

The company caters to those willing to pay $30 to view the places where various stars died in nasty ways. The demand appears heavy. One must make reservations, but if someone doesn't show, they accept "standby" passengers at $25. Today's group includes four Chicagoans, two locals, and your reporter. The driver explains that the other tour companies scorn their outfit. And the Westwood Memorial Park has gone so far as to ban Grave Lines from its sacred precincts. But we are not visiting any cemeteries today. This tour goes right on location.

The driver explains that every item on his "death sheet" has been researched and verified. We won't be seeing any memorabilia of the recently departed. They maintain a strict five-year "cooling off" period. "We don't want any necrophiliacs crowding in," our guide explains.

First stop is just around the corner, at a rather shabby motel where Janis Joplin "said goodbye to Bobby McGee for the last time." How did this happen? The singer "zilched out" on an overdose of heroin.

I should explain that this commentary comes in the bleedin nysel tweng of Australian guide Gary Menna, a pleasant chap, a good driver, and a fathomless vault of information about Hollywood. For example, we learn that the Wilcoxes, the city's founders, intended the place to be a religious retreat. Gary came here on holiday and never looked back. When he is not extemporizing on illustrious deaths, he plays a prerecorded sound track of hymns and various songs popularized by the departed loved ones.

Next comes the abode of Ozzie and Harriet Nelson, once the First Family of American television. Ozzie took a two-mile swim in the ocean every day and "that's probably what killed him." Actually, Gary adds, it was cancer. We leave the Nelsons and cruise by the home of Peter Lorre, who "once submitted to bloodletting by leeches." The actor thought this would lower his blood pressure. It didn't.

Now it's on to more recent stuff, the Chateau Marmont, where the "bloated" John Belushi received his fatal drug overdose at the hands of a friend. "There's where they brought the body out," Gary says, adding that the blues brother and his buddies tore up the bungalow where they were staying. We also see a liquor store where the famous junkie once threw a tantrum.

In the distance we see the dark, castle-like dwelling of Bela Lugosi, where the actor began his morphine addiction. He was reportedly buried in his Dracula cape. Not so lucky was neighbor Jack Cassidy, who liked to smoke in bed. He wound up burned beyond recognition, to the point that, in Gary's opinion, "they should have given him a discount" on the subsequent cremation.

The guide deftly recreates the scene in which Sal Mineo, then 37, was stabbed to death, the victim of an apparent robbery. The place where the blood flowed is now marked by a blotch of oil.

Gary points out an apartment where on October 4, 1969, the daughter of celebrity Art Linkletter took LSD and jumped to her death from a high balcony. Here the guide shows his light, nuanced approach. He quips that the mashed corpse may have provided a local restaurateur with "inspiration for his pizza."

On the other hand, the death of actor Jack Webb, who played Joe Friday in the crime series *Dragnet*, so inspired the local chief of police that he ordered flags flown at half mast. I believe it was this same official who in 1979 suggested that his boys be sent to vanquish the Ayatollah and free the hostages.

The venerable Beverly Hills Hotel soon looms before us. It was here in 1977 where, not long after his magnificent performance in *Network*, Peter Finch keeled over for good. It happened right in the lobby. Not far away, a narcoticized Richard Dreyfuss once smashed up his new Mercedes-Benz. His agent said he never touched the stuff, but our guide gives all the details, as if to say, *"j'accuse!"*

We next see the very telephone pole into which Montgomery Clift smashed his car. Elizabeth Taylor, whom he had just left, apparently rushed to the scene and scooped the broken teeth from his throat so he could breathe. Clift survived but went on to become "the longest suicide in Hollywood history."

Things get heavy up on Cielo Drive, where Charlie Manson's gang did their helter-skelter routine. Our guide shows his scrupulous attention to detail by passing around a copy of Sharon Tate's death certificate. The "cause of death" section reads: "multiple stab wounds to chest and back." The document adds, somewhat mysteriously, "page one of two." But the coroner wouldn't give out page two. Gary thinks that Manson's folks did some very nasty things to the child Tate was carrying. He has also learned that the owner of the house sent the cleaning bill to the victim's parents. The owner was doubtless a flower child, one of the beautiful people. He had 35 offers to buy the place after the massacre and recently sold it for a tidy sum. The average house price in the area is five million dollars.

And then there was Superman, AKA George Reeves. We see the room where he "supposedly blew his brains out" with a "warm Luger." Gary is having none of it, however. There were no powder burns on Reeves' nude body, and he thinks the death was a "studio-arranged hit" followed by a massive cover-up in which

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the police collaborated. Remember, everything on this tour has been verified.

Less mysterious is the site where Lana Turner's daughter plunged a knife into Johnny Stompanato, who "bled to death in five minutes." We also see the armored door of mobster Bugsy Siegel's estate. Unfortunately, Mr. Siegel was sitting by the window one evening when a hail of bullets from unknown assailants "nearly tore his head from his body."

Sustaining a slightly less serious head injury was singer-surfer Jan Barry of Jan and Dean fame. When Barry wrecked his sports car he didn't die but joined the "brussels sprout brigade." That Gary, I swear he's a million laughs.

And then there was Peg Entwistle, a British stage actress who, like many, sought fame on the screen. Also like many, she failed to attain stardom. When her contract was not renewed, she climbed up on the letter H of the famous Hollywood sign and cast her fate to the wind.

We see the house where the Christian Scientist mother of Jean Harlow kept her ailing daughter in a room, away from doctors. But we don't linger outside one of the Gershwin residences, because a senior family member has threatened to call the cops. Some people nearing the age of 100 apparently don't like to see a hearse waiting in the wings, especially one with "Grave Line Tours" emblazoned on the side.

My favorite locale is the mansion where Lupe Velez, the then-pregnant fiancée of Johnny (Tarzan) Weissmuller, gulped a fistful of barbiturates. As legend has it, she penned a suicide sonnet, decked her bed in roses, administered the hemlock, laid herself down, and slipped gently into that good night like a true screen goddess. Not so, says Gary. The maid found her in the bathroom, head in the toilet, where she had gone to vomit but passed out. Death came by drowning. Here, I think, is a piece of fearful symmetry for Hollywood: the guilded image camouflaging the ugly reality; the flowery legend hiding the squalid truth. It is thesis and antithesis, with no synthesis in sight.

That is likely why the other tours so despise the Grave Line crowd. Gary and his boss may be upstarts, but they know what this town is all about. Tourists come here to see monuments and bodies, not actual people. Hollywood is a vast necropolis, camouflaged with makeup, hype, and of course money.

At one point, we pass the massive dwelling of Johnny Carson's ex-wife, which served as a comfy departure point for Truman Capote. "I am a homosexual, a drug addict and a genius," was how the late novelist described himself, probably in the correct order. He also said: "Living in Southern California is like living in Forest Lawn." The man does have a point.

K.L. Billingsley lives outside of San Diego.

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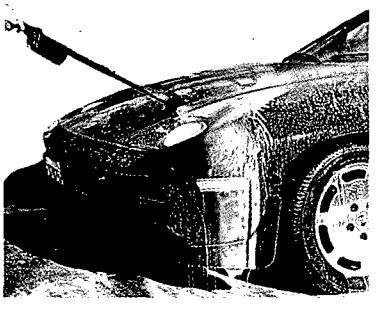

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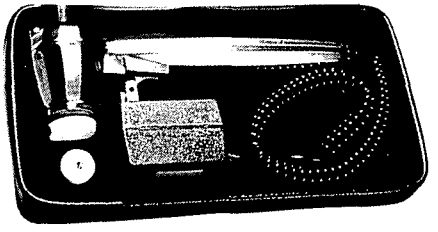

The Novafon Sonic Massager from West Germany boasts over one half million users in Europe and hundreds of sports trainers, physiotherapists, health clinics and physicians recommend the Novafon worldwide. That's because mixed frequencies of sound (up to 10,000 oscillations per second) penetrate 2¼" beneath the skin to stimulate blood circulation and relax stressed muscles. Made of light metal alloy, and with no moving parts to wear out, it's completely safe. 7½", 8oz., 14" coiled cord extends to 6 ft. Comes with 1 flat, 1 rounded washable head, handsome carrying case. 1 year warranty. NOVAFON SONIC MASSAGER **$159.98** ($10.00) #A1869.

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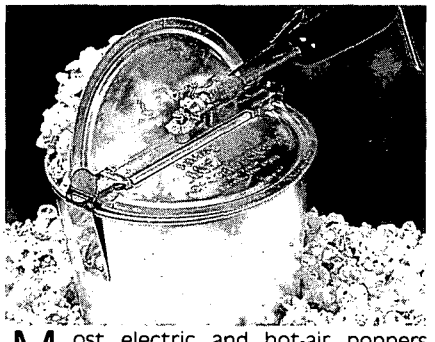

Most electric and hot-air poppers "puff" the corn more than they "pop" it, leaving it tough with hard centers. This flat-bottomed stove-top popper reaches 475° and pops full in two minutes with 4 quarts of the best popcorn you ever tasted. Stirring paddle with through-the-handle crank virtually eliminates burnt or unpopped kernels. Wooden handle for safe grip, two dump lids. Pop without oil for delicious diet popcorn. 370 calories per 4 qt. bowl. Produce tender, fluffy, old fashioned movie theater popcorn, **$21.98** ($4.50) #A1876.

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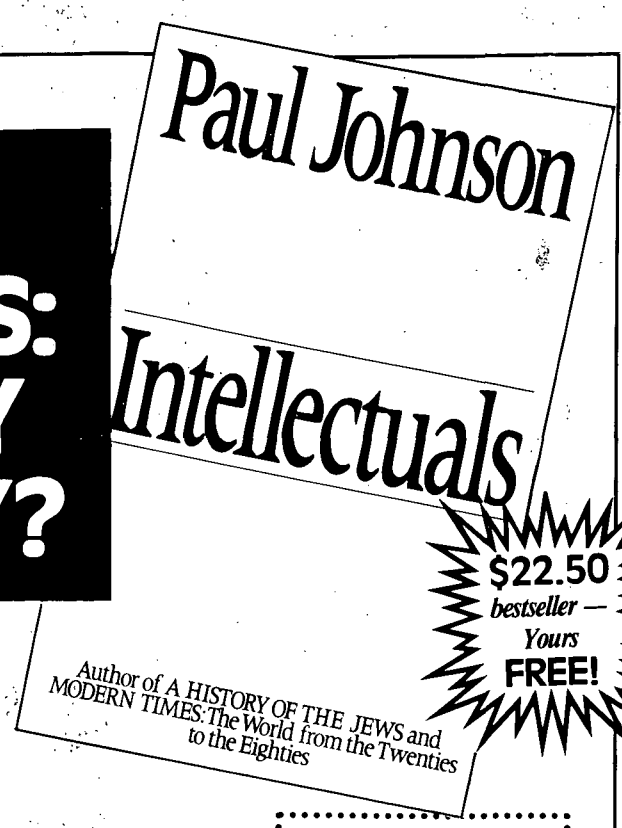

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